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THE HISTORY OF

THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST.

VOLUME THE THIRD:

CONTAINING

THE SIXTH, SEVENTH, EIGHTH, NINTH, TENTH, ELEVENTH, AND TWELFTH CENTURIES;

ALSO PART OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY,

WHICH INCLUDES

THE HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES TO THE REFORMATION.

BY THE LATE

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WITH ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS BY THE

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PREFACE.

IF the real Church Historian find it a difficult task to extract a connected view of his peculiar subject from the Ecclesiastical materials of the fourth and fifth Centuries, that difficulty is multiplied a hundredfold, while he labours through the long and gloomy period, which in the present Volume engages his attention.

Impressed, however, with the certain truth of the declaration made by the Divine Author of Christianity, "that the gates of hell shall never prevail against his Church," I have endeavoured all along to discover her actual existence. How far I have succeeded, the Reader must determine for himself. If the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel have not been exhibited, both as professed in various parts of the world, and as productive of those fruits of holiness, which are peculiarly Christian, my aim has been missed, and the grand design of the whole narration has failed. But I hope the Scriptural Reader will see the lineaments of the Church pervading these dark Centuries; provided that he divest himself of all partial regards for sects and denominations, ages and countries, and attend exclusively to the marks and evidences of genuine Christianity. This is the right frame of spirit, which the subject before us requires; and it is what I have steadily endeavoured to preserve.

Tros Rutulusve fuat nullo discrimine habebo.

In the former part of the Volume, Gregory I. of Rome, and the English Christians, will be found

objects deserving our serious attention. Nor should we be prejudiced against the real Church, because she then wore a Roman garb. Undoubtedly she was by this means much defiled with superstition; for that was as much the predominant evil of those times, as profaneness is of our own. The last-mentioned evil admits of no coalition with Christian holiness; but superstition, to a certain degree, may co-exist with the spirit of the Gospel. When that degree is exceeded, and general idolatry takes place, the system then becomes too corrupt to deserve the name of the Church of Christ. I have marked this limit to the best of my judgment in the course of this History, have exhibited the MAN OF SIN matured in all his gigantic horrors, and from that epocha I despair of discovering the Church in the collective body of nominal Christians. Every Reader will observe the various features of Antichrist described in this Volume, and some may perhaps be enabled to form a more distinct and adequate conception of the nature of Popery, than they had before acquired.

Leaving therefore the general Church of Rome, after she had entirely ceased to HOLD THE HEAD, I either travel with faithful Missionaries into regions of heathenism, and describe the propagation of the Gospel in scenes altogether new, or dwell with circumstantial exactness on the lives and writings of some particular individuals, in whom the Spirit of God maintained the power of godliness, while they remained "in Babylon." The former object displays one of the brightest prospects of this whole period, and seems to rebuke the supineness of modern times, in regard to the extension of divine truth among Pagan nations. The latter, I trust, will be found to afford matter of Christian instruction. The pleasure and benefit, which, as I have repeatedly heard, has been derived from the perusal of Augustine's Life and Confessions in the preceding Volume, encourage

me to expect, that the review of the lives and writings of Anselm and of Bernard in this, may not be without similar fruit.

The History of these seven Centuries, as it has hitherto appeared in our common Ecclesiastical narratives, it must be confessed, is extremely uninteresting. If I have had some advantages for enlivening and illuminating the scene, let those be ascribed to the peculiar nature of my plan.

The account of the WALDENSES, which closes the Volume, belongs not to the Thirteenth Century exclusively; it is however, ascribed to it, because in the course of that Century most extraordinary persecutions and conflicts took place among this people, and particularly excited the attention of Europe. It was also judged proper to give one unbroken narrative of Waldensian transactions in Ecclesiastical matters, till the time of the Reformation.

If the Reader learn some practical lessons concerning the power, wisdom, goodness, and faithfulness of GOD, from the review of the events which lie before him, I shall have reason to rejoice, nor shall I think my labour to have been in vain.

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CENTURY VI.

CHAP. I.

THE LIFE OF FULGENTIUS, AND THE STATE OF THE AFRICAN CHURCHES IN HIS TIME.

IN the year 495, a storm began again to lower over the African Churches. Thrasamond, whose reign then commenced, as obstinate in Arianism as Huneric, but more sagacious and less bloody, mingled the arts of gentleness and severity against them. On the one hand he strove to gain over the orthodox by lucrative motives, on the other he forbad the ordination of bishops in the vacant Churches *. Eugenius, whose faithfulness was so severely tried in the former persecution, had been called to sleep in Jesus before the commencement of this. The African bishops showed however that divine grace had not forsaken them. They determined unanimously not to obey an order, which threatened the extinction of orthodoxy. They ordained bishops, and filled the vacant Sees, though they foresaw the probability of Thrasamond's resentment. But they thought it their duty to take care of their flocks at this hazard, rather than to seem to consent to the king's unrighteous prohibitions. Thrasamond, enraged, determined to banish them all. Fulgentius about that time was chosen bishop of Ruspæ. In him we behold another instance of the effects of the religion revived

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Thrasamond, king of the Vandals in Africa, begins his reign, A. D. 495.

Thrasamond persecutes with severity.

* See Fleury, B. XXX. Vol. iii.

CHAP. I.

under Augustine. Fulgentius's life is written by one of his disciples, and dedicated to Felician, a bishop, who was the successor of Fulgentius. The review of it, and of his own works, will give us a specimen of the power of divine grace victoriously struggling under all the disadvantages of monastic superstition, and the childish ignorance of a barbarous age. Fulgentius was descended from a noble family in Carthage, where his father was a senator. His grandfather Gordian, flying from the arms of Huneric, retired into Italy. After his decease, two of his sons, returning into Africa, now settled under the Vandal government, found their family-mansion possessed by the Arian clergy. By royal authority however they received part of their patrimony, and retired to Constantinople. In that part of the world, at Tellepte, Fulgentius was born, being the son of Claudius one of the brothers, and of Marriana, a Christian lady, who, being soon left a widow, gave her son a very liberal education, for which Constantinople afforded at that time peculiar advantages; and thus his mind became stored with Greek and Roman learning. As he increased in religious seriousness, he inclined more and more to a monastic life, for which he gradually prepared himself by successive austerities in Africa, the country of his father, to which he returned with his mother. He was received into the monastery of Faustus, a bishop whom the Arian persecution had banished from his diocese to a place contiguous to it, where he erected his monastery. The spirit and fashion of the times so transported him, that, at first, he refused even to see his own mother who came to visit him, though he afterwards behaved to her with the greatest filial duty. He underwent severe bodily sufferings from the renewal of the Arian persecution. He was beaten with clubs so cruelly, that he confessed afterwards he scarcely found himself capable of enduring the pain any

longer, and was glad to induce his tormentors by some conversation to allow an interval to his afflictions. For he seems to have been of a weak and delicate constitution, and the softness of his early education rendered him unfit to bear much hardship. His mind, however, appears to have been serene and faithful to his Saviour, whom, in real humility and sincerity, though tarnished with the superstition of the times, he served according to the fundamentals of the Gospel. The Arian bishop of Carthage, who had known Fulgentius, and esteemed his character, highly disapproved of this treatment, which he had received from a presbyter of his own religion and diocese, and told the injured youth, that, if he would make a formal complaint before him, he would avenge his cause. Many advising him to do so, "It is not lawful, says Fulgentius, for a Christian to seek revenge. The Lord knows how to defend his servants. Should the presbyter through me be punished, I shall lose the reward of my patience with God, and the more so, as it would give an occasion of stumbling to the weak, to see an Arian punished by a Monk." By and by he retired into the more interior parts of Africa. Some time after he sailed to Syracuse, and then visited Rome, and saw there king Theodoric in the midst of a magnificent assembly. If men in this life, seeking vanity, attain such dignity, what will be the glory of saints who seek true honour in the new Jerusalem? —this was the reflection of Fulgentius. Ruspæ in Africa was the place to which, much against his will, he was at length elected bishop: but this exaltation lessened not the severity of his way of life: and by the Arian persecution he was banished into Sardinia, in company with other faithful witnesses of orthodoxy. Upwards of sixty bishops were with him in exile. Thrasamond sent more still into Sardinia, in all 220, exerted himself mightily in overcoming the constancy of the orthodox, and

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Fulgentius, Bishop of Ruspæ, banished into Sardinia.

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delighted to ensnare them with captious questions. Fulgentius was sent for by him to Carthage, and by his skill in argument, and his readiness in answering questions, excited the king's admiration—till through the advice of his Arian clergy, who looked on the presence of Fulgentius as dangerous at Carthage, he was remanded to Sardinia. Soon after, Hilderic, the successor of Thrasamond, in the year 523, favouring the orthodox, put a total end to the persecution, and Ruspæ once more beheld her bishop.

Hilderic succeeds Thrasamond.

A. D. 523.

Fulgentius dies.

A. D. 529.

He lived among his flock from this time to his death, eminent in piety, humility, and charity. For near seventy days he suffered extreme pains in his last sickness—"Lord, give patience here and rest hereafter," was his constant prayer—and he died at length, as he had lived, an edifying example of every Christian virtue. I feel almost ashamed to have written so barren a life of a man undoubtedly excellent in godliness. But the reader, as well as myself, must be content with the poverty of materials. In an age of learning and genius the life of Fulgentius would have shone abundantly. In his treatise to Morinus on Predestination, he observes *, "The internal master, from whom we have received the supply of celestial doctrine, not only opens to inquirers the secrets of his words, but does also himself inspire the grace to make inquiry. For we cannot so much as hunger after the bread which comes down from heaven, unless an appetite be given to persons before fastidious, by him who deigns also to give himself to satisfy the hungry. From him it is, that thirsting we run to the fountain, who affords to us himself, that we may drink." He afterwards expresses himself with great energy "on the internal doctrine of divine inspiration, where truth speaks the sweeter, as it is the more secret." I shall not expect any man, but one who is truly taught of

* Book I. Ch. I.

God, to give a candid interpretation of this. "I pray to be taught many more things which I do not know, by him, from whom I have received the little which I do know. I beg by his preventing and following grace to be instructed*," &c. In what follows he shows how seriously he had made the sentiments of Augustine his own, in discussing points exceedingly intricate, with that author's modesty and dexterity, particularly in resolving all sin into pride†. CENT. VI.

In a subject so arduous as Predestination, it is very easy to push men into difficulties. Our author observes‡ that some Frenchmen had objected to Augustine, that he had described men as predestinated not only to judgment but also to sin: from which charges the learned and holy Prosper defended the sentiments of the African prelate, whose death prevented any answer from himself. Prosper says, the unbelief of men is not generated from predestination; for God is the author of good, not of evil. Infidelity is not to be referred to the divine constitution, but only to the divine prescience.

With equal dexterity he defends the faith of the Trinity, in a book addressed to king Thrasamond. Let it suffice to mention one argument for the divinity of the Holy Ghost, toward the close. "If he can quicken who is not God; if he can sanctify who is not God; if he can dwell in believers who is not God; if he can give grace who is not God, then the Holy Ghost may be denied to be God. If any creature can do those things, which are spoken of the Holy Ghost, then let the Holy Ghost be called a creature." In a treatise on the incarnation and Grace of Jesus Christ‖ he answers the trite objection against divine election drawn from the words, "God would have all men to be saved," by showing that upon the views of those who see no mystery in the subject, but resolve the distinction into the

* Ch. IV. † Ch. XVII. ‡ Ch. XXX. ‖ Ch. VII.

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merits or demerits of men, Almighty God ceases to be incomprehensible, as the Scripture describes him to be. He allows the great truth, that God would have all men to be saved, and yet that there is a depth, not to be fathomed by man in the destruction of so many sinners. Much more might be quoted from this author, on subjects essentially connected with the Gospel of Christ. But the diffusiveness of the quotations from Augustine may supersede the necessity of enlarging on the views of one, who so closely followed his steps, and who wrote and lived with a similar spirit.

His epistles.

Besides several doctrinal treatises, we have also a few epistles of this saint. The fourth to Proba, concerning prayer, deserves to be carefully studied. It is an excellent sample of the humble piety of the African school. He instructs the lady in his favourite doctrine of grace connected with humility, and justly infers, that if a man as yet innocent could not remain so by his natural power, much less can this be expected from him now that he is in a state of so great depravity. He describes, in a pathetic manner, the snares arising from the craft of Satan, and the corrupt workings of the heart, declaring that though the Lord from time to time attends with aids during the sharp war, lest his people faint, yet our mortal nature is suffered to be overloaded with the burden of corruption, that we may feel our helplessness, and have speedy recourse to divine grace. He describes the conflict between flesh and spirit; shows that it must last through life; that prayer and watching are ever necessary, and that a conceit of our perfection would lead us into deadly pride. He recommends a humble, contrite frame of spirit, not only for the beginning, but for the whole course of a Christian's progress, and concludes with a beautiful view of the perfect rest from sin which remains for him hereafter. It is refreshing to the mind, to see the real principles of Christianity

appearing in great vigour and clearness in this little composition. CENT. VI.

The epistle to Eugyptius * on Charity, while it describes this greatest of Christian graces in a manner much resembling that of Augustine, demonstrates the benevolent spirit of the writer. In an epistle to Theodorus a senator †, he congratulates him on his victory over the world. He had been, it seems, a Roman consul, and had given up secular pursuits through the love of heavenly things. Fulgentius strongly reminds him to whose grace alone he was indebted for the change, and recommends humility ‡, "a virtue which neither those have who love the world, nor those who profess to have renounced the world by their own strength." By which distribution of the unconverted into two sorts he points out the same division of men, which has ever taken place from the time of Christ. Pharisees and Sadducees were their names among the Jews; in the Gentile world the appellation of Stoic and Epicurean gave the same distinction. In the school of Augustine lovers of the world formed one denomination, confident boasters in their own strength the other; and in our times the same difference is commonly marked by the terms worldly-minded and self-righteous; while in all ages the genuine religion of real humility stands contradistinguished from both these classes. Fulgentius recommends to Theodorus the constant study of the Scriptures. "If you come to them meek and humble, there you will find preventing grace, by which, when fallen, you may rise;

* Ep. 5. † Ep. 6.

‡ The practice of Fulgentius agreed with his doctrine. About the end of the year 524, a bishop in an African council disputed precedency with him.—The council decided for Fulgentius, who for that time acquiesced in the authority of the council. But, observing how much the other was afflicted at the determination, in a future council he publicly desired that it might be reversed. His humility was admired, and his request was granted.

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accompanying grace, by which you may run the way of righteousness; and following grace, by which you may reach the heavenly kingdom."

In the epistle to Venantia, concerning Repentance*, he steers in the middle course between presumption and despair, invites all men of every age to repent and be converted, under the confident expectation of acceptance with God through Jesus Christ, and mentions our Lord's parable of the different hours in which labourers are brought into the vineyard, as an argument that no time is fixed to debar the returning sinner. Jesus would not have come to save the lost in this last age of the world, if human wickedness was ever too strong for divine mercy and goodness. He observes, that the great defect of Judas in his repentance lay in this, that he had no faith in that blood which he had betrayed. He quotes pertinent scriptures, and, to comprehend in one nervous sentence the whole subject, he says†, "A salutary conversion is two-fold; it is when repentance leaves not him who hopes in the divine favour, nor hope deserts the penitent: and it is evidenced by this, if a man with his whole heart renounce his sin, and with his whole heart place his hope of forgiveness in God. For sometimes the devil takes away hope from the penitent, sometimes repentance from him who hopes. In the first case he overwhelms the man whom he burdens, in the second he throws down him whom he sets at ease." —Hear his testimony to the mystery of the Gospel. "The only begotten God so loved human nature, that he not only freed it from the power of the devil, but also placed it at the right hand of the Father in himself above all good angels."

In his epistle concerning the baptism of a dying negro, who had given previous proofs of sincerity, while he was a catechumen, but in the time of baptism itself was senseless and incapable of professing

* Ep. 7. † Ch. V.

his faith; he endeavours to obviate the doubts of those who were afraid lest his incompetency should prevent his salvation. There are two points observable in this epistle, one is the custom of the Church in presenting infants to baptism, the other is, that however rapid the progress of superstition had been in the time of Fulgentius, yet the most destructive superstitions, and those which are directly subversive of Christian faith and purity, both in doctrine and practice, were as yet unknown. He assigns as a reason for not baptizing the dead, that sins are irremissible after the separation of the soul from the body. He supports his opinion with the declaration of the Apostle, that we must be judged according to the things done in the body. Nothing can be more conclusive against the pernicious doctrine of purgatory. CENT. VI.

I observe further that he uses the word "to justify" in the same sense in which Augustine does; nor does the true idea of the word seem to be recovered by the Christian world till the days of Luther*.

He speaks of the evils of the Pelagian heresy, and describes the strength and ability given to Augustine against it, and strongly recommends the writings of that father to the Christian world, as containing a more copious instruction of divine grace, than had been known some time before, though the doctrine itself, he contends, had ever been held in the Church †.

* De Verit. Præd. B. I. C. XIV.
† Ibid. B. II. C. XVIII.

CHAP. II.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH IN OTHER PARTS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, TILL THE DEATH OF JUSTIN, INCLUDING THE LIFE OF CÆSARIUS.

CHAP. II.

IN the beginning of this century, Alaric king of the Visigoths reigned at Toulouse, and was sovereign of a kingdom on the confines of France, and Spain, though afterwards, the Visigoths, by the victorious arms of the Franks, were confined to the latter country. Most of his subjects were of the general Church, and he himself was an Arian; yet he treated them with great humanity, and gave leave to the bishops of his kingdom to meet together at the city of Agde. Twenty-four bishops assembled, the president of whom was Cæsarius, bishop of Arles. They made a number of canons, relating to discipline, two or three particulars of which may be mentioned. "All clergymen who serve the church faithfully shall receive salaries proportionable to their services." This rule, so simple and general, was the ancient provision for the maintenance of pastors. But, by another canon of this council, clergymen are allowed, provided they have the bishop's leave to reserve to themselves the revenues of the Church*, saving its rights, but without the power of giving away or alienating any part; and here is the origin of benefices. "In all Churches the creed shall be explained to the competents† on the same day, a week before Easter. All such laymen as shall not receive the communion three times a year, at the three great festivals‡,

* Fleury, B. XXXI. 1. Vol. IV.

† Who seem to have been those who applied for baptism.

‡ Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide.

shall be looked on as heathens. Oratories may be allowed in the country to those who live at a great distance from the parish churches, for the ease and convenience of their families; but they must appear at their parish-churches on certain solemn festivals." This last rule showed at once a regard for parochial order, and for the instruction of the people*. The next is equally laudable: "Lay-men are ordered to remain in the Church till the blessing is pronounced." Cæsarius was very zealous against the abuses meant to be rectified by this canon. He observed one day some persons going out of the Church to avoid hearing the sermon, "What are you about, my children? cried he, with a loud voice, where are you going? Stay, stay, for the good of your souls. At the day of judgment it will be too late to exhort you." This just and charitable zeal prevailed at length; but he was often obliged to cause the Church-doors to be shut, after the Gospel was read, to prevent the indecent practice. His people were however reclaimed, and they repented by degrees. There are still extant two of his sermons on this subject. Mankind in all ages are apt to be weary of God's word; there were however pastors in the western Church, who served for charity, and not for lucre. Another canon deserves to be mentioned. It forbad auguries, and divinations, and the opening of the Scriptures with a view to make an omen of the first words that offered. We have seen, that Augustine had opposed this last-mentioned superstition. Here it was forbidden under penalty of excommunication. Yet it still prevailed. I see the African schools, virtuously but unsuccessfully, struggling against the increasing darkness and superstition.

CENT. VI.

* The union of these two in just proportion gives a perfect idea of good discipline. It would be well if similar care were taken for many places in our own country, far distant from parish-churches.

CHAP. II.

Cæsarius had spent some part of his youth in the famous monastery of Lerins*. Hearing afterwards that he was actually designed to be made bishop of Arles, he hid himself among the tombs. But he was taken out thence, at the age of thirty, was appointed bishop, and continued in that Church above forty years. He delighted in singing, and as he found the laity were apt to talk in the Church, while the clergy were singing, he induced the laity to join with them in psalmody; and, in a sermon still extant, he exhorts them to sing with their hearts, as well as their voices. In another sermon he exhorts them to throw off all distracting thoughts, before they prostrate themselves for prayer. "Whoever, says he, in his prayers, thinks on a public place of resort, or the house he is building, worships that place or that house." He directs them also not to be content with hearing the Scriptures read in the Church, but to read them also at home.

This holy man gave himself entirely to reading and preaching. He preached on all Sundays and holidays. If he was himself hindered from preaching, he caused his own sermons, or those of Augustine, whom he highly revered, or those of Ambrose, to be read by other ministers. His style was plain, and adapted to common capacities. He entered into practical particulars, searched the consciences of his hearers, and severely reproved idolatrous and superstitious usages.

He was once, by calumny, ejected from his Church; but Alaric, his sovereign, on the discovery of his innocence, restored him. He was exposed to similar sufferings afterwards; but was again delivered, and amidst the confusions of the times distinguished himself exceedingly by acts of mercy. He died in the year 542, universally lamented.

A. D. 542.

* This little island, which we have had repeated occasion to mention, is now called St. Honorat, is close to the French coast, and lies between Nice and Toulon.

In the mean time the cause of Arianism was gradually declining, partly by the progress of the Franks, and partly by the influence of Sigismund, king of Burgundy, who succeeded his father Gondebaud, having been brought over to orthodoxy by Avitus, bishop of Vienne, a year before. CENT. VI.

Sigismund, king of the Burgundians, having been induced, by the calumny of his second wife, to put to death his son Sigeric, and finding afterwards his error, repented in great bitterness, and besought God to punish him in this life and not in the next. His prayer seems to have been heard; for, in the year 523, he was attacked by Clodomir, king of the Franks, the successor of Clovis, and was afterwards slain with his wife and children. Clodomir himself was soon after slain in Burgundy, and his three sons were brought up by Clotilda, the widow of Clovis, their grandmother. Sigismund slain. A. D. 523.

Such was the state of the Church of Christ in France during the former part of this century. In Italy, some degree of genuine piety may be presumed to have still existed, though I have no interesting particulars to record. If we turn our eyes to the East, the prospect is far more disagreeable. Factions and feuds, heretical perversions and scandalous enormities fill up the scene. Under the emperor Justin, Christianity began at length to wear a more agreeable aspect in some respects, and peace and good order, in external things at least, were in a measure restored. In the year 522 Zamnaxes, king of the Lazi, a people who inhabited the country anciently called Colchis, being dead, his son Zathes repaired to Constantinople, telling the emperor that he was desirous of receiving the Gospel, and of relinquishing the idolatry of his ancestors. They had been vassals to the king of Persia, and had been obliged to perform sacrifices after the Persian mode. He put himself therefore under the protection of Justin, and desired to receive the crown from his Zathes comes to Constantinople. A. D. 522.

CHAP. II.

hands. Justin granted his requests, and thus the Lazi became vassals to the Eastern Empire, and embraced Christianity. The Iberians, who bordered on their territories, and were also subjects to the king of Persia, had already received the Gospel. How far any thing of the real spirit of Christ's religion was imbibed by either nation, I know not. I can only say, the limits of the Christian name were extended in the East*.

Cruelty of Dounouas. A. D. 522.

In Arabia Felix† there were many Christians subject to a king‡ called Dounouas, a Jew, who caused those who were unwilling to become Jews to be cast into pits full of fire. In the year 522 he besieged Negra, a town inhabited by Christians. Having persuaded them to surrender by capitulation, he broke his oath, burnt the pastors, and beheaded the laymen, and carried all the youth into captivity. Here then the real church of Christ may be traced by sufferings voluntarily undergone for his sake. The next year Elesbaan, king of Abyssinia, a country which, as we have formerly seen, had been Christian since the days of Athanasius, supported by the emperor Justin, invaded the territories of the Arabian Jew, subdued his country and slew him. Thus the Arabian Christians were relieved. Elesbaan himself was very zealous, and gave this proof of his zeal, that he resigned his crown to embrace the monastic life.

* Fleury XXXI. 59. † Id. 60.

‡ Bruce, in his Travels into Abyssinia, toward the latter end of the 1st vol. calls this king Phineas, who, he says, threw Christians into pits of fire, particularly a preacher Hawaryat, signifying the Evangelical, with ninety of his companions. The king of Abyssinia, who fought against the Jew, he calls Caleb. His story, as extracted from Abyssinian and Arabian annals, is the same; and their correspondence, in this instance, with the Greek history, gives some testimony to the authenticity of the materials of Bruce's Abyssinian history.

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THE STATE OF THE CHURCH DURING THE REIGN OF JUSTINIAN.

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Justin becomes emperor. A. D. 527.

ON the death of Justin, surnamed the Thracian, his nephew Justinian succeeded at Constantinople in the year 527. He was then forty-five years old, and reigned thirty-nine. I scarcely know any prince, whose real and ostensible character were so different. If one judge by external things, he may appear one of the wisest, the most pious, and the most prosperous of men. He re-united Africa and Italy to the Roman empire; he is to this day famous for his code of laws; he was temperate and abstemious in private life, and was incessantly employed in religious acts and ceremonies; he honoured monks and persons reputed holy, built sumptuous churches, endowed monasteries, was liberal beyond measure in the support of the externals of religion, was incessant in the encouragement of orthodoxy, at least of that which to him appeared to be so; indefatigable through the course of a long life in public affairs; seems scarcely to have ever unbended himself in any recreations, spent much time in religious speculations, rooted out idolatry from its obscure corners, and brought over a number of barbarous kings and nations to the profession of Christianity. What a character, if his heart had been right! His understanding and capacity indeed have been called in question; but I think unjustly. No weak man could have done half of what he did. He must have been a person of superior talents, and of very vigorous and strong faculties. But so far as appears from his conduct, he was, in religion, altogether the slave of superstition,

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in morality the slave of avarice. For gold he sold his whole empire to those who governed the provinces, to the collectors of tributes, and to those who are wont to frame plots against men under any pretences. He encouraged the vilest characters in their detestable and infamous calumnies, in order to partake of their gains. He did also innumerable pious actions, says Evagrius*, and such as are well pleasing to God, provided the doers perform them with such goods as their own property, and offer their pure actions, as a sacrifice, to God. In this emperor then it may be seen more eminently what a poor thing the body of christian religion is without the spirit. Whatever benefit the church might, in some cases, derive from his administration, particularly in what relates to the extension of its pale, this is to be ascribed to the adorable Providence of God bringing good out of evil. On the other hand the evil he wrought was palpable. Dissensions and schisms, forced conversions attended with cruelties, which alienated men's minds still more from godliness, the growth of superstition and formality, the miserable declension of real internal godliness,—especially through the East, where his influence was most extensive,—and the increase of ignorance and practical wickedness, were the undoubted consequences of Justinian's schemes.

In truth this man attempted too much: he pressed uniformity of doctrine through the world by imperial menaces and arms: he laboured to bring all nations into a nominal attachment to Christianity: he prescribed what bishops and laity should believe, and was himself, in effect, the pope as well as the emperor of the Roman world; yet, wretched

* Ch. XXX. B. IV. Evagrius Scholasticus. His ecclesiastical history takes us up, just after we are deserted by Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, the tripartite historians of the same period: and in future I must make some use of him, though in historical merit far inferior to the three former.

being! he seems not to have known any one thing in religion in a right manner. In external things he could not but sometimes be right; in internal religion it was hardly possible he should be so; for he was ignorant of his own heart, while his eyes and ears with insatiable curiosity were intent on all persons and objects. It will not be pertinent to the design of this history to enter into a detail of the actions of such a prince; but the view of his character, which I think is supported by the concurrent testimony of civil and ecclesiastical historians, may teach persons of eminence, either in power, or learning, or genius, who shall give their minds to religious objects, to be in the first place more concerned for their own genuine conversion, and for personal godliness*; and then to contract and limit their plans within the humble circle that belongs to a fallible, confined, and short-lived creature like man; and steadily to move within that circle in the propagation and support of the Gospel of Christ, and of whatever is virtuous and praiseworthy, without being seduced by romantic and dazzling schemes to attempt what is vastly above their reach; for by this method they may be the victims of their own ambition or avarice, while they think they serve God, and may fill the world with evil, while they vainly suppose they are its benefactors. But these are ideas with which the profane and the careless governor has no right to meddle: Justinian was neither

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* Nothing shows in a stronger light the emptiness of his mind than his boasting after he had finished the magnificent Church of St. Sophia, "I have excelled thee, Solomon!" Yet was this vain emperor made use of by Divine Providence as a shield to support external Christianity at least in the world. In his time Chosroes king of Persia persecuted the Christians in his dominions with extreme cruelty, and publicly declared, that he would wage war not only with Justinian, but also with the God of the Christians. The military measures and the religious zeal of Justinian however checked the progress of his ferocity.

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the one nor the other. He was in earnest through life, though void of humility, faith and charity; and for serious spirits, the caution, which his character is calculated to give, will stand an instructive lesson.

In his first year he made laws relating to bishops: a few words of them will deserve to have a place in this history. "The absence * of bishops, says he, is the reason that divine service is so negligently performed; that the affairs of the Churches are not so well taken care of, and that the ecclesiastical revenues are employed in the expenses of their journeys, and of their residence in this city, Constantinople, with the clergy and domestics who accompany them. —Let no bishops quit their churches to come to this city, without an order from us, whatever may happen.—If we find their presence to be necessary here, we will send for them." What motives induced bishops to attend the courts so much, is easy to guess; and we have here a plain description how much the Eastern Church was secularized, and how it gradually ripened into a fitness for desolating judgments.

Justinian says further, "When an episcopal see becomes vacant, the inhabitants of the city shall declare in favour of three persons, whose faith and manners shall be testified by witnesses, that the most worthy may be chosen." He proceeds to lay down rules to restrain the avarice of bishops; rules, which had no existence in purer times, because a purer spirit prevailed.

Council of Orange. A. D. 529.

In the year 529, a council, memorable for its evangelical spirit, was held at Orange in France. Cæsarius was its head. He had, as I observed, tasted the doctrine of Augustine concerning grace, and was therefore zealous for its propagation. We may reasonably suppose the articles of this council

* Fleury, B. XXXII. 10.

to have been framed in opposition to the attempts made in France in favour of Semi-Pelagianism, as well as to give testimony to the grace of the Gospel. —Thirteen bishops were present, and we have a pleasing spectacle of the work of the Divine Spirit flourishing in a considerable degree in France, particularly in the parts about Orange, and in the vicinity of the Rhone. "Adam's sin," says the council *, "did not only hurt the body, but the soul; it descended to his posterity; the grace of God is not given to men, because they call upon him, but that grace is the cause that men do call upon him: the being cleansed from sin, and the beginning of our faith, is not owing to ourselves, but to grace. We are not able by our own natural strength to do or think any thing which may conduce to our salvation. We believe that Abel, Noah, Abraham, and the other fathers, had not by nature that faith that St. Paul commendeth in them, but by grace." To clear the Almighty of being the author of sin, they add however, "that some may be predestinated to evil, we not only disbelieve, but detest those who think so." CENT. VI.

These words express in substance the sentiments of these holy men. But to enable the reader to judge more precisely for himself what they were, I shall give him two passages from the fifth and seventh canons, translated at length from the Latin original. "If any one say, that the beginning or increase of faith, and the very affection of belief is in us, not by the gift of grace, that is, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit correcting our will from infidelity to faith, from impiety to piety, but, by nature, he is an enemy to the doctrine of the Apostles." "If any man affirm, that he can, by the vigour of nature, think any thing good which pertains to salvation as he ought, or choose, or consent

* See Fleury, B. XXXII. 12.

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to the saving, that is to evangelical, preaching, without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who gives to all the sweet relish in consenting to and believing the truth; he is deceived by an heretical spirit."

I have been solicitous to preserve faithfulness to the original in this short abstract. Doubtless the sweet relish they speak of is no other than that ineffable delight in the perception and obedience of the Gospel, which characterizes the godly in all ages, subjects them, though unjustly, to the charge of enthusiasm, and produces real practical Christianity. In every effusion of the Spirit of God it always appears in rich exuberance, and is as distinct from formal or even merely theoretical views of religion, as the substance is from the shadow. I look on it as a remarkable fact, that so plain a testimony to vital religion should be given in the South of France in the sixth century, when the Christian world was every where so overspread with darkness. It seems that in this part of France at least, Semi-Pelagianism had been checked: indeed, as several espousers of it were real good men, it is not to be wondered at, that by further experience and attention they might be led to embrace in system what in their own sensations they must have known to be true, namely, that man, by nature, is lost and helpless in sin, and that grace only can revive him. Cæsarius, of Arles, was in all probability, highly instrumental in producing this change of sentiment; for we should recollect, that Hilary, of Arles, had been a Semi-Pelagian. I should rejoice to be able to gratify the spiritual reader with the account of the lives, labours, and works of these thirteen bishops of France, which were probably useful and edifying. But my records say no more; and this is one of the thousand cases in which I have occasion to regret, how little of real Church-history has been written, how much of ecclesiastical perversions and abuses.

In the same year a council was held also at Vaison*, at which were present twelve bishops, of whom Cæsarius was one. They decreed, according to the custom observed in Italy, that all country priests should receive into their houses young men, who might be readers in the Church, that they should educate them with a paternal regard, causing them to learn the Psalms, to read the Scriptures, and to be acquainted with the word of God; and in this way should provide themselves with worthy successors†. For the convenience of the people, the pastors were allowed to preach not only in the cities, but in all the country parishes. CENT. VI.

About this time the monastic rules of Benedict were established, which afterwards were received through the western Churches. They are full of forms, and breathe little of the spirit of godliness. The very best thing that I can find recorded of the superstitious founder, is the zeal with which he opposed idolatry. In that part of Italy, where the Samnites formerly dwelt, the worship of Apollo had been still continued. He eradicated this idolatry, and instructed the peasants in Christianity.

In a council held at Clermont‡, in the year 535, I see canonical methods were still used to prevent the interference of secular power in the appointment of bishops. "To correct the abuse of obtaining bishoprics by the favour of princes, it is decreed, that he who is a candidate for a bishopric shall be ordained by the election of the clergy and citizens, and the consent of the metropolitan, without making use of the protection of PERSONS IN Council of Clermont. A. D. 535.

* Fleury, B. XXXII. 12.

† This is quite consonant to the ancient method of educating men for the pastoral offices, and supplied the want of ecclesiastical seminaries. While so much attention was paid to education and the word of God, there is reason to believe that the doctrines of the Gospel must have been taught with some success in France.

‡ Fleury, B. XXXII. 44.

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POWER. Otherwise the candidate shall be deprived of the communion of the Church, which he is desirous of governing."

Hilderic, king of the Vandals in Africa, having been deposed by Gilimer, Justinian, by his renowned general Belisarius, recovered the country from the barbarians, and reunited it to the empire. This put an end to the dominion of Arianism in that region. The orthodox were reinstated; two hundred and seventeen bishops held a council at Carthage; Arians and Donatists were forbidden to hold assemblies, and the lands which had been taken from the Arians were restored by an edict of Justinian in the year 535. The face of true religion was recovered in this country; its spirit I cannot find. The best symptom was the extension of Christianity among the Moors, by the zealous care of Justinian. How far any cordial change took place among them does not appear.

Justinian restores to the Arians their lands.

A. D. 535.

In the year 536, Belisarius, the hero of this age, took Rome from the Goths, though some time elapsed after this event before the Gothic power was annihilated in Italy. But what has this our history to do with his triumphs? His master showed much zeal for religion, though ill directed; and what is worse, not principled with the genuine fear of God. The General scarcely seemed to profess any religion at all; and the most remarkable ecclesiastical transaction in which he was concerned is sufficient to brand his name with eternal infamy. A very brief view of it shall suffice *. Theodora, the empress, gave an order to Vigilius, deacon of the Roman Church, to require Belisarius to secure his election to the bishopric of Rome, and the expulsion of Silverius, at that time bishop. Vigilius was in that case to present Belisarius with two hundred pounds of gold. The venal General executed the order on

Belisarius takes Rome.

A. D. 536.

* Fleury, B. XXXII. 57.

the infamous conditions, and delivered Silverius into the hands of Vigilius, who sent him into the island of Palmaria, where he died of hunger*. It was worth while just to mention this villany, that, if any persons have been seduced into an admiration of the character of Belisarius on account of his military prowess, they may see how much splendor of false virtue may exist in a man who is altogether void of the fear of God. CENT. VI.

Justinian, though at first he seemed to take some pains to correct the consequences of this scandalous transaction of his wife, of his General, and of the unprincipled bishop of Rome, at length suffered the whole scheme to stand. Still he persisted to meddle in religious controversies, and issued an edict for the condemnation of Origen's errors.

In the year 542, a council held at Orleans ordered, that if any person desired to have a parish church erected on his estate†, he should first be obliged to endow it, and to find an incumbent. Hence the origin of patronages. Council of Orleans. A. D. 542.

In the year 555 died Vigilius, bishop of Rome, after having governed eighteen years in the see which he had so iniquitously obtained. Selfish duplicity marked his character more eminently than that of any Roman bishop before him. But he paid dear for his intrigues and dissimulation. Justinian, who had the ambition of acting as an infallible judge of controversies himself, suffered not Vigilius to be the pope of the Church. On the contrary, a little before his death, he was, though very reluctant, compelled by the emperor to consent to the decrees‡ of a council held at Constantinople; Death of Vigilius. A. D. 555.

* So Liberatus in his Breviary; but Procopius, a living witness, says, that he was murdered at the instigation of Antonia, the wife of Belisarius, by Eugenia, a woman devoted to her.

† Fleury, B. XXXIII. 15.

‡ This was the fifth general council, or the second of Constantinople. A. D. 553, and 27th year of Justinian.

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which, by the influence of Justinian, condemned the writings called the Three Chapters; that is, three books, or passages of books, one of which was the work of the pious Theodoret of Cyprus. The controversy itself was idle and frivolous; yet, how many pages of Church-history, so called, does it fill! But I can find no vestige of piety in the whole transaction. "Therefore eternal silence be its doom."

Several western bishops, because they refused to condemn the three chapters, were banished by the order of Justinian. What advantage was it to the Church, that Italy and Africa were recovered to nominal orthodoxy, and to the Roman empire, when she was thus oppressed by her pretended protector!

Justinian, in his old age, fell into the notion, that the body of Jesus Christ was incorruptible. Having once formed the sentiment, he drew up an edict, and, in his usual manner, required his subjects to embrace it. Eutychius, bishop of Constantinople, had the honesty to refuse the publication of it. "This, said he, is not the doctrine of the Apostles. It would follow from thence that the incarnation was only in fancy. How could an incorruptible body have been nourished by the milk of its mother? How was it possible for it, when on the cross, to be pierced by the nails, or the lance? It cannot be called incorruptible in any other sense, than as it was always unpolluted with any sinful defilement, and was not corrupted in the grave."

But the imperial mandate was stronger than the arguments of the bishop, however reasonable. He was roughly treated, was banished from his see, and died in exile: he acted however uprightly, and seems from his integrity to have been a Christian indeed. Anastasius, bishop of Antioch, resisted also with much firmness: he was a person of exemplary piety, whom Justinian in vain endeavoured to gain over to his sentiments. As he knew the emperor intended to banish him, he wrote a farewell discourse to his

people. He took pains to confirm the minds of men in just ideas of the human nature of Christ, and daily recited in the Church that saying of the Apostle: "If any man preach to you any other Gospel than that which ye have received, let him be accursed *." The example of a truly holy and upright person supporting a just cause is very prevalent. Most around him were induced to imitate. An opinion directly subversive of the real sufferings of Christ, on which the efficacy of his atonement depends, appeared altogether unchristian. But God had provided better things for us, says Evagrius. While the old imperial pope was dictating the sentence of banishment against Anastasius and other prelates, he was smitten with the stroke of death. Let not profane persons exult over him; but let those who exercise their thoughts on religion, take care to study the written word with humility, prayer, and pious reverence, warned by the apostasy of a man, who for many years had studied divinity, and fell at last into an error, equally subversive of the dictates of common sense, and of Christian piety, and diametrically opposite to all Scripture: let us remember, however, that his follies and persecutions were the occasion of exhibiting some excellent characters even in the eastern Church, who showed that they bore not the Christian name without a just title to that best of all appellations. CENT. VI.

* Gal. i. Evagrius, B. IV. toward the end.

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MISCELLANEOUS AFFAIRS TO THE END OF THE CENTURY.

JUSTIN, the nephew of Justinian, succeeded †. He recalled the bishops whom the late emperor had exiled, Eutychius, of Constantinople, alone CHAP. IV.

† Evagrius, V. C. 3.

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excepted. The reason of this exception I cannot learn; but, after the decease of John, his successor, who held the see twelve years, Justin was prevailed on to restore Eutychius, who continued bishop of Constantinople till his death. His integrity and piety should scarcely be doubted after the long course of suffering which he sustained on account of the faith of Jesus. But, in his old age he embraced a whimsical notion, that our bodies after the resurrection become thinner than air. A notion which it would not have been worth while to have mentioned at all on its own account. But it is a specimen of the low state of Christian knowledge in the East, and of the predominancy of Origenism and Platonism, which had never been exterminated in Asia, since they had gained admission into the Church. For the opinion, though not so fundamentally erroneous as that of Justinian, originated from the same fanciful school: and we may see what a blessing it was to the West to have been instructed in the Christian doctrines of grace through Augustine, whence the purity and simplicity of the faith was preserved in a much superior manner; and fantastic notions could not so easily be received among them *.

Origin of Britanny. A. D. 446.

A number of Britons having been expelled from their country by the arms of the Anglo-Saxons, who had entered the island in the year 446, crossed the sea and settled in the adjacent parts of France. Hence the origin of the French province of Britanny. With them the faith of the Gospel was preserved, as well as with their brethren in Wales and Cornwall, and some parts of Scotland and Ireland, while the major part of England was covered with Saxon idolatry. Sampson, originally a Welshman, left his own country and came into Britanny. This man founded a monastery at Dol, and was bishop of

* Eutychius, however, before he died, retracted his error.

Dol himself some years. He died about the year 565, and was renowned for piety and learning in his day. He had been educated in his native country by Heltut, who was said to have been the disciple of Germanus, of Auxerre. Thus the seed sown in our island by that holy person brought forth fruit; and it is only to be regretted, that the accounts of these things are so slight and scanty. About the same time died St. Malo, who, to prevent his being appointed bishop of Winchester, forsook our island, and fled to the coast of France. To the west of Britanny there was an island called Aletha, now called St. Malo's, the greatest part of the inhabitants of which were Pagans. At the desire of the few Christians who were there, Malo laboured among them, till most of the inhabitants received the Gospel, and persuaded him to reside among them as their bishop, which he did till his death*. Other British bishops are celebrated, who in the same age were distinguished for their piety and useful labours in Britanny.

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Death of the Bishop of Dol.

A. D. 565.

Gildas, surnamed the Wise, another disciple of Heltut, was born at Dumbarton in Scotland; he preached with much success, in the best sense, so far as appears, in his native country and in Ireland. He afterwards came over into Britanny, and built the monastery of Buis, which is still called by his name, says my author. Two of his discourses on the ruin of Great Britain are still extant, in which he deplores the vices and calamities of the times, and, ascribing the desolations made by the Saxons to the depravity of his countrymen, he with honest vehemence exhorts six British princes to repentance. He addresses with much spirit the clergy of Great Britain, and rebukes them for their ignorance, avarice, and simony.

From these hints, in conjunction with what has been elsewhere related, these things are evident;

* Fleury, B. XXXIV. 14.

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namely, that there had been a considerable degree of pure religion among our ancestors before the invasion of the Saxons; that even after the declension and decay, there were still faithful pastors, who carried back into France that spirit of godliness which the latter country, by the means of Germanus of Auxerre, had brought over into our island; and that the poison of Pelagianism must have had a considerable influence in the production of that national decay of piety, which Gildas so feelingly deplores.

Colomban, an Irish priest in this century, came over into the northern parts of Scotland, and laboured with much success among the Picts*. The southern parts of Scotland had been evangelized long before by the instructions of Ninias, a British bishop, who had himself been instructed at Rome. Colomban lived thirty-four years after his passage into Britain. His disciples were remarkable for the holiness and abstemiousness of their lives. Thus, while the Gospel was rapidly withdrawing from the East, where it first arose, God left not himself without witness in the most distant parts of the West.

Radegunda, daughter of Bertharius, king of Thuringia, having been taken captive by the Franks in her infancy, fell to the lot of king Clotaire, who married her. This woman might have been added to the list of those pious persons of her sex, who were made highly instrumental in instructing mankind, had she not imbibed monastic ideas, the pest which infected godly persons, in general, in these times, and which, though it could not ruin their relation to God, cut off the greatest part of their usefulness. She obtained a separation from her husband, and followed the monastic rules with great austerity to her death. These rules were now grown stricter than ever; the

* Probably they were originally Britons who fled into Scotland from the arms of the Saxons, and were called Picts, because they painted their bodies, according to the custom of our barbarous ancestors.

vows were made perpetual, and this godly queen, who might have caused her light to shine in a blessed manner in the world, was shut up during the remainder of her life in a nunnery. CENT. VI.

Toward the latter end of this century, the Lombards came from Pannonia into Italy, and settled there under Alboinus, their first king. They fixed their metropolis at Pavia. As they were Arians by profession, heresy again took root in Italy, whose inhabitants felt all the horrors and miseries which a savage and victorious nation could inflict. But the Church needed the scourge: the Roman See had deen dreadfully corrupt under Vigilius, and formal superstition was corroding the vitals of genuine godliness.

At the same time John Climmachus flourished, who was abbot of the monastery of Mount Sinai, in Arabia, near to which was a little monastery, called the Prison, in which all who had committed any great crime, since they entered on the monastic state, voluntarily confined themselves. The account which Climmachus gives of it is striking. The poor prisoners spent their time in prayer, with every possible external mark of self-denial and wretchedness. They did not allow themselves any one comfort of human life. In their prayers they did not dare to ask to be delivered entirely from punishment; they only begged not to be punished with the utmost rigour. The voluntary torments they endured were amazing, and this voluntary humility of theirs continued till death. But I turn from the disagreeable scene to make one remark:

How precious is the light of the Gospel! how gladly, we may suppose, would many of these miserable persons have received the doctrine of free forgiveness by faith in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, if it had been faithfully preached among them! How does their seriousness rebuke the levity of presumptuous sinners among ourselves, who trifle

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with the light! how deeply fallen was the East from the real genius of Christianity, when men distressed for sin could find no hope but in their own formalities and rigid austerities!

Remarkable Story of Levigildus.

A. D. 584.

In the year 584, Levigildus, king of the Visigoths in Spain, having married his eldest son Hermenigildus, to Ingonda, daughter of the French king, began to find effects from the marriage, which he little expected. Ingonda, though persecuted by her mother-in-law, the wife of the Spanish monarch, persevered in orthodoxy, and, by the assistance of Leander, bishop of Seville, under the influence of divine grace, brought over her husband to the faith. The father, enraged, commenced a grievous persecution against the orthodox in his dominions. Hermenigildus was led into the grievous error of rebelling against his father, not through ambition, it seems, but through fear of his father, who appeared to be bent on his destruction. Being obliged to fly into a church, he was induced by his father's promises to surrender himself. Levigildus at first treated him with kindness, but afterwards banished him to Valentia. His wife Ingonda flying to the Grecian emperor died by the way. Some time after, the young prince, loaded with irons, had leisure to learn the vanity of earthly greatness, and exhibited every mark of piety and humility. His father sent to him an Arian bishop, offering him his favour, if he would receive the communion at his hands. Hermenigildus continued firm in the faith, and the king, enraged, sent officers, who dispatched him. The father lived however to repent of his cruelty; and the young prince, notwithstanding the unjustifiable step into which his passions had betrayed him, had lived long enough to give a shining example of Christian piety. Levigildus, before he died, desired Leander, bishop of Seville, whom he had much persecuted, to educate his second son Recaredus* in

* Gregory of Tours, B. VIII. C. ult.

the same principles in which he had instructed his eldest. Recaredus succeeded his father in the government, and embraced orthodoxy with much zeal, the consequence was the establishment of orthodoxy in Spain, and the destruction of Arianism, which had now no legal settlement in the world, except with the Lombards in Italy. Though this account be general and external, it seemed proper to give it, as an illustrious instance of the work of Divine Providence, effecting, by the means of a pious princess, a very salutary revolution in religion. CENT. VI.

I have collected in this chapter the few events which appeared worthy of notice from the death of Justinian to the end of this century, with a studied exclusion of the concerns of Gregory the first, bishop of Rome. He is a character deserving to be exhibited distinctly. And in connection with his affairs, whatever else has been omitted, which falls within our plan, may be introduced in the next chapter.

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GREGORY THE FIRST, BISHOP OF ROME.

HIS PASTORAL LABOURS.

HE was a Roman by birth, and of a noble family. But being religiously disposed, he assumed the monastic habit, and was eminently distinguished by the progress he made in piety*. It was not till after he was drawn back, in a degree, to a CHAP. V.

* Bede Eccles. Hist. B. II. C. I.
It should be observed here, that before this he had studied the Roman jurisprudence, was eminent in that and every other fashionable secular kind of knowledge, had been distinguished as a senator, and promoted by Justin II. to the government of the city of Rome, an arduous and important office, which he had discharged with singular prudence, fidelity, and justice,

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secular life by his employments in the Church, that he became thoroughly sensible what advantage he had enjoyed for his own soul from religious retirement. With tears he owned that he had had the world under his feet while he was absorbed in heavenly contemplation; but was now bereft of comfort. "Now," says he, "my mind, by reason of pastoral cares, is oppressed with the business of secular persons, and after so fair an appearance of rest, is defiled with the dust of earthly action. And suffering itself to be distracted by outward things in condescension to many, even while it desires inward things, it returns to them, without doubt, more faintly. I weigh, therefore, what I endure: I weigh what I have lost, and while I look at that which I have lost, my present burdens are more heavy."

In truth, in different periods of his life he moved in opposite extremes. He was one while dormant in the quietism of solitude; another while, involved in the multiplicity of episcopal cares at Rome. If his lot had been cast in the earlier and purer days of Christianity, he would neither have been a monk, nor a bishop charged with such extensive secular concerns, and so would have avoided the evils of which he complains. The great Sees in these times, that of Rome in particular, through the increasing growth of spiritual domination, and the load of worldly business very improperly connected with it, worldly, though in some sense ecclesiastical, were indeed agreeable enough to minds like that of Vigilius, earthly and ambitious, but were fatiguing beyond measure to men like Gregory, who unfeignedly loved heavenly things. Nothing could be more unwise than the custom which prevailed of encouraging monasticism and very large episcopal governments at the same time. The transition from the one to the other, as in Gregory's case (and it was a common one) must to holy minds, like his, have been a trial of no small magnitude. The serious

complaints, however, which Gregory made of this trial during the whole scene of his bishopric, proceeded from the spirituality of his affections; and all, who have enjoyed in private the sweets of communion with God, and have found how difficult it is, in the hurry of business, to preserve a degree of the same spirit, will sympathize with him. A mediocrity, and a mixture of employment and retirement is, doubtless, the best situation for religious improvement. CENT. VI.

Being drawn from his monastery, and ordained to the ministry, he was sent from Rome to Constantinople, to transact ecclesiastical affairs. Here he became acquainted with Leander, afterwards bishop of Seville, the same person that we have spoken of in the relation of the affairs of Spain. Leander and he found in each other a similarity of taste and spirit; Gregory opened his heart to him: "I found my soul," says he, "convinced of the necessity of securing salvation; but I delayed too long, entangled with the world. At length I threw myself into a monastery; now I thought I had placed an insuperable bar between myself and the world. But again I am tossed on the tempestuous ocean, and unless I may enjoy the communion of my brethren, I can find no solace to my soul*."

He had, however, taken with him some of the brethren of his monastery, and with them had enjoyed the benefit of Christian discourse, and of searching the Scriptures. Here, also, through their exhortation, he began his long commentary on the book of Job, which he finished in his episcopacy†. His residence at Constantinople was not without, at least, some use to the church. By his arguments and influence he quashed the fanciful notion of the archbishop Eutychius, already mentioned, concerning the qualities of the human body after the resurrection. Had it not been for the timely and vigorous

* Gregor. Pref. to Job, C. I. † Bede.

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opposition of a man so respectable as Gregory was for knowledge and piety, the notion might have continued, with many, to the disgrace of Christianity at this day. The emperor Tiberius, who had succeeded Justin, supported the labours of Gregory with his authority.

Gregory, even from his youth, was afflicted with frequent complaints in his stomach and bowels; and by his own account in his letters, he appears to have suffered much in his body all his days. The vigour of his mind however was not depressed, and perhaps few men ever profited more than he did by such chastisements. His labours, both as a pastor and an author, were continued, and, in all probability, received peculiar unction from his afflictions.

After his return to Rome*, there was so great an inundation of the Tiber, that it flowed upon the walls of the city, and threw down many monuments† and antient structures. The granaries of the church were overflowed, by which a prodigious quantity of wheat was lost. Presently after, an infectious distemper invaded the city. Pelagius the bishop fell a victim to it among the first. The destruction prevailed, and many houses were left without an inhabitant. In this distress the people were anxious to choose a bishop in the room of the deceased Pelagius, and by unanimous consent the election fell upon Gregory. He, with that humility which formed invariably a striking feature of his character, earnestly refused, and loudly proclaimed his own unworthiness. He did more; he wrote to Mauritius, the successor of Tiberius, beseeching him to withhold his assent‡. Germanus, the governor of Constan-

* Vita Gregor. incert. autor.

† These inundations of the Tiber were not uncommon. The classical reader will recollect in Horace, Ode II. Lib. I.

Ire dejectum monumenta regis, &c.

‡ The assent of the emperor to the election of a bishop of Rome appears plainly to have been necessary by the custom

tinople, intercepting the messenger, and opening the letter of Gregory, informed Mauritius of the election. The emperor confirmed it with pleasure. In the mean time the plague continued to make dreadful havoc; and Gregory, however backward to receive the office of a bishop, forgot not the duties of a pastor. A part of his sermon on this occasion may give us some idea of the best preaching of those times; for I know none in those days which is superior, and but little which is equal, to that of Gregory. CENT. VI.

"Beloved brethren, we ought to have feared the scourge of God before it came; at least, after having felt it, let us tremble. Let grief open to us the passages of conversion; and let the punishment, which we feel, dissolve the hardness of our hearts. For, to use the prophet's language, 'the sword hath come even into the soul.' Our people, behold, are smitten with a weapon of divine indignation, and each is carried off by the rapid devastation. Languor does not precede death, but death itself with hasty strides, as you see, outstrips the tardy course of languor. Every person, who is smitten, is carried off, before he has opportunity to bewail his sins. Conceive in what state that man will appear before his Judge, who is hurried off in the midst of his sins.—Let each of us repent while we have time to weep, before the sword devour us.—Let us call our ways to remembrance.—Let us come before his face with confession, and lift up our hearts with our hands to the Lord.—Truly he gives to our trembling hearts a confidence, who proclaims by the prophet, 'I would not the death of a sinner,

of these times. But the total exclusion of the people from all concern in these appointments had not yet obtained. It is obvious to be noticed also, how dependant the bishop of Rome was on the emperor. Antichrist had not yet formally begun his reign, nor would have been known at Rome to this day, had all the bishops resembled Gregory.

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but rather that he should be converted and live.' Let none despair on account of the greatness of his crimes. Think how the inveterate evils of the Ninevites were wiped off by three days repentance*; and that the converted robber in the very article of death obtained the rewards of life. Let us change our hearts, and encourage ourselves beforehand with the thought that we have obtained what we ask.—Importunity, so disagreeable to man, is well pleasing to the Judge of truth; because the good and merciful Lord loves to be overcome by prayers. —Remember the Psalmist: 'Call upon me in the time of trouble; so will I hear thee, and thou shalt praise me.' He admonishes us to call upon his name, and witnesses by this his readiness to forgive."

Gregory concluded his discourse with appointing a litany† to be performed by seven companies, who were to march at break of day from different churches, and to meet at one place. The first company consisted of the clergy; the second, of abbots with their monks; the third, of abbesses with their nuns; the fourth, of children; the fifth, of laymen; the sixth, of widows; the seventh, of married women. Fourscore persons in one hour, while the people were supplicating in the litany, died of the plague. Gregory, however, persisted in praying and preaching till the plague ceased.

Gregory the Great made bishop of Rome against his inclination. A. D. 590.

He was all this time as eager to avoid the honour of the episcopal office, as he was to discharge the duty of it. The gates were watched, and his flight was prevented for a time. But he found means to be conveyed in a wicker basket out of the city, and concealed himself three days. The zealous search of the people discovered him at length, and he was

* I translate faithfully; the expression marks the want of evangelical accuracy in Gregory, though not surely the want of evangelical humility. It is not to be imagined that he considered repentance as a proper atonement for sin.

† The word signifies Supplication.

obliged to enter upon his bishopric. This happened in the year 590. CENT. VI.

Gregory continued to discharge the office in the same spirit, in which he began it. Other bishops had been sedulous to adorn churches with gold or silver; he gave himself wholly, so far as he could, to the care of souls*. The melancholy circumstances of his accession, corresponded with the gloomy state of the Church,—in the East, almost universally fallen,—in the West tarnished with much superstition, and defiled by variety of wickedness. The whole period of his episcopacy, which was thirteen years and a half†, was disastrous beyond measure, because of the ferocious Lombards; and Gregory himself was firmly persuaded that the end of the world was near. Hence he had evidently a strong contempt of sublunary things, and loved to refresh his mind with prospects beyond the grave. Nor has the sceptical, philosophical taste, as it is called, of this day, any reason to plume itself on comparison with that of Gregory. What is there, for instance, in the scene we have been just reviewing, which should excite the contempt of the philosopher, or rather, of the infidel who calls himself philosopher? Some superstition has appeared in it: it was an age of superstition: the form of Christianity was degenerated even in the best; but the divine religion sparkled through the gloom in the real life of humility, faith, and repentance. The spiritual benefit of many, it is highly probable, resulted from the pastoral labours and litanies of Gregory; and whether is more rational, to fear the wrath of God, when his hand is upon us, to weep and pray, and implore his grace and mercy, in reliance on the promises of his word, beholding the scourge as really sent from God; or to harden the heart in jocose and fastidious sneers at the weakness of superstition, and to see and learn nothing from

Christian spirit of Gregory.

* Bede. † Idem.

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the desolating judgments of the Almighty, that may lead us to repentance.

His epistles.

In Gregory's works we have a collection of epistles, which will give us a view of his labours and transactions. Discipline, and indefatigable attention to order, justice, mercy, and piety, mark all his proceedings. The inordinate amplitude of authority and of extensive jurisdiction, to which superstition had already advanced the Roman See, and which afforded such copious fuel to pride and ambition in some of his predecessors and many of his successors, was to him only the cause of anxious care and conscientious solicitude. Italy and Sicily were of themselves too large a theatre of action; but with the government of these he received the prevailing notion of a superintendance of the Roman See over all the churches, derived from St. Peter. In him, at least, the idea excited no pleasing sensations of dominion. A fatherly inspection of Christendom without civil power called him to incessant labour; besides that his own diocese was much too great for any one man's capacity. Humility and the fear of God were his ruling dispositions; and it is evident to a careful observer of Gregory, that he exerted authority in full consistency with these. Moreover he found time to expound the Scriptures, to perform the office of a sedulous pastor, and to write much for the instruction of mankind. Deeply must the spirit of that man have been impressed with the prospects and hopes of immortality, who amidst bodily infirmities, and in times of public perplexity, could persevere in such a course of arduous labours. I shall endeavour to enable the reader to form a judgment for himself of the man, by a review of his letters; omitting those which are the least interesting.

He directed the bishops of Sicily to hold an annual visitation at Syracuse or Catana under his subdeacon, and to attend in it to things which

related to the public and ecclesiastical welfare, to relieve the necessities of the poor and oppressed, and to admonish and correct those who had fallen into errors. In which council he begs that they would be guarded against malice, envy, and discord, and maintain a godly unity and charity *. CENT. VI.

He reminds the prætor of Sicily, whose duty it was to send corn into Italy from that fruitful granary of the empire, to be just and equitable in his dealings, to remember that life is short, that he must soon appear before the Judge of all, and that he can carry away with him nothing of his gains, and that only the causes and methods of his gains will follow him to judgment †.

To a friend he writes thus on his promotion: "I value not the congratulations of strangers on my advancement. But it is a serious grief to me, that you, who know me thoroughly, should felicitate me on the occasion. Ye have long known my wish; I should have obtained the rest which I sought, could I have been gratified in it ‡."

"If charity," says he, writing to John bishop of Constantinople, "consist in the love of our neighbour, why do not ye love me as yourselves? With what ardour and zeal ye would fly from the weight of episcopacy I know, and yet ye took no pains to hinder the imposition of this burden on me. But as the government of an old and crazy vessel is committed to me, weak and unworthy as I am, I beseech you, by the Lord, that you would stretch out the hand of prayer to my relief ‖."

The employment of deciding causes, which in these times fell to the lot of bishops, must have been tedious and burdensome to a mind of conscientious exactness, like that of Gregory. Hear how feelingly he complains of the load, in a letter to Theoctista, sister to the emperor:

* B. I. Ep. 1. † Ep. 2. ‡ Ep. 3. ‖ Ep. 4.

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"Under* colour of the bishopric, I find I am brought back to the world, in which I am enslaved to such a quantity of earthly cares, as I never remember to have been infested with in my lay capacity. I have lost the sublime joys of myself; and sinking inwardly, seem to rise externally. I deplore my expulsion from the face of my Maker. I was endeavouring to live out of the world and the flesh: to drive away all the phantasms of body from the eyes of my mind, and to see supernal joys mentally; and with my inmost soul panting after God, I said, my heart hath said to thee, 'thy face, Lord, will I seek.' Desiring nothing, and fearing nothing of the world, I seemed to have almost realized that of the prophet: 'I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth.' Surely it is so with him, who looks down from his intellectual elevation on all the grandeur and glory of the earth. But suddenly from the height of peace and stability, impelled by the whirlwind of this temptation, I have fallen into fears and terrors; because though I fear not for myself, I fear much for those who are committed to my charge: I am shaken with the fluctuations of causes on all sides, and say, 'I am come into deep waters, so that the floods run over me.' After the hurry of causes is over, I desire to return to my heart, but excluded from it by the vain tumults of thoughts, I cannot return." Such is the picture which Gregory draws of his mental situation in the midst of all his envied greatness. Experience and habit might in time lessen his anxieties. Nor was it through want of capacity for business that he suffered thus extremely. No age ever saw a bishop more vigorous, firm and circumspect. The immensity of ecclesiastical employment, which went through his hands, seems almost incredible. I rejoice to find in him such vivid tokens of that spiritual sensibility and life, which it is the

* B. I. Ep. 5.

great business of this history to delineate, as it appeared from age to age in the church, and which distinguishes real Christians as much from nominal ones, as from all other men. In the mean time I have to regret, that while the power and experience of godliness decayed, the amplitude of bishoprics was so much augmented, and that so much extraneous matter, which ought to have been committed to other hands, was thrown upon them. The consequence has been that the dignitaries of the church have ever since been thrown into circumstances peculiarly disadvantageous. Those of a secular spirit have toiled with eagerness for worldly and selfish ends, without feeling any injury to the spiritual life, because they had none; those of an heavenly spirit have felt like Gregory under the united pressures of conscientious care and the tumult of thoughts very alien from the Christian life, and tending to extinguish it.

The pious and upright Anastasius of Antioch has been already introduced to the reader's notice. Gregory had contracted an intimacy with him while in the East, and he writes to him thus in answer to his letter: "I received your letter, as a weary man does rest, as a sick man health, as a thirsty person a fountain, as one overcome with heat a shade. I read not mere words; I perceived the heart itself to be discovering your affection towards me in the spirit." He goes on to complain of Anastasius's cruel kindness, in having contributed to his promotion, and describes his burdens in his usual manner. "But when you call me the mouth and lamp of the Lord, and a person capable of profiting many, this is added to the load of my iniquities, that I receive praise instead of punishment for my sins. How I am overloaded, no words can express; you may form some idea from the brevity of my letter, in which I say so little of him whom I love above all. I have begged of the emperor

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to allow you to visit me at Rome, that while I enjoy your company, we may relieve the tediousness of our pilgrimage by conversing together of the heavenly country *." It is not easy for persons, unacquainted with their own heart, to believe all this sense of unworthiness to be genuine in Gregory; men who know themselves will believe that he spake sincerely.

Gregory was solicitous for the conversion of the Lombards from the Arian heresy, and therefore he wrote to the bishops of Italy, to avail themselves of their influence to unite all the young persons of that nation, who had been baptized in the Arian communion, to the general church, to preach to them the doctrine of eternal life, and to secure to themselves a pleasing account of their pastoral labours at the last day †. Under his administration a gradual accession of this people was made to the church, notwithstanding the great power of the Lombard princes, and their obstinate attachment to Arianism. Indeed the shining example of Gregory himself must have made a very powerful impression on the minds of all who had opportunity of knowing him. He was careful to preserve the great revenues of the church, but no man was ever more conscientious to employ them to good purposes. As he loved to imitate his predecessor Gelasius ‡, he followed the statement of the revenues which he had drawn up, and formed an estimate of them in money; distributions of which he made to the clergy, monasteries, churches, the officers of his house, deaconries, and hospitals. He regulated the sums to be allotted to each at four times of the year, an order which was observed three hundred years after. A great volume was kept in the palace of the Lateran, containing the names of the poor who were the objects of his liberality, their age and

* Ep. 7. † Ep. 17. ‡ Fleury, B. XXXV. C. XVI. Vol. IV.

circumstances, at Rome, in Italy, and even in distant provinces. On every first day of the month, he distributed to the necessities of the poor, according to the season, various articles of provision. Every day he distributed alms to the sick and infirm; and before he sat down to eat, he sent portions from his table to some indigent people, who were ashamed to appear. It would be tedious to recount from his letters * the instances of his liberality. He pressed his agents to inform him of objects, and loved to exceed the expectations of his petitioners. But while he abounded in benefactions, he would receive none himself. "We ought to refuse," said he, writing to Felix bishop of Messina, "presents which are expensive to the churches. Send to the other clergymen every year what is established by usage. But as I love not presents, I forbid you to send me any for the future. I thank you for the palm-trees which you sent me, but I have caused them to be sold, and have sent you the price of them." The unhappy wars of Italy having caused great desolations of the Churches, that the remaining inhabitants might not be forsaken, he gave those churches in charge to the neighbouring bishops. If two of them did not contain, singly, a sufficient number of persons to constitute a diocese, he joined them together under one bishop, insisting on equal care being taken of that in which he did not reside, as of that in which he did. He made no difficulty of obliging a bishop to leave a small church, where he was little more than titular pastor, to govern a more important one †. Having discovered several abuses committed in the management of the revenues in Sicily, he took care to reform them. "We are informed," says he ‡, "that corn is bought of the peasants, under the market price; I direct that they be paid always

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* Ep. 18, 44, 23, 57, 65, 54, 30.

† B. I. Ep. 42.—He writes thus to Peter his agent in Scily.

‡ Ep. 64, &c. B. II. Ep. 20.

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according to the current price, without deducting the corn lost by shipwreck, provided that you take care that they do not transport it out of season. We forbid all base exactions; and, that after my death the farmers may not be charged anew, let a certificate be delivered to them in writing, containing the sum which each is obliged to pay. Take particular care, that false weights be not made use of in receiving the payments, as the deacon Servus Dei discovered, but break them in pieces, and cause new ones to be made. I have been informed that farmers are distressed at the first time of the payment of their rents; for, having not yet sold their fruits, they are obliged to borrow at heavy interest. Supply them therefore out of the stock of the church with what they may have borrowed, and receive their payments by degrees, lest you oblige them to sell their commodities at an under price, to make good their rents. In general, I WILL NOT SUFFER THE CHURCH TO BE DEFILED BY BASE GAINS."

This is a specimen of the uprightness and attention of Gregory to those secular concerns, under which his spirit so much groaned. A pharisee would have found a feast for his pride in so much beneficence. But Gregory was humble, he could not find rest to his soul in such exercises, however laudable; and though his heart and head seemed as well fitted as any man's in any age for such work, and though he went through it with much ability and success, yet it were to be wished that he had been allowed a larger portion of time to pay attention to the more spiritual duties of his station. This short extract however (for the account might have been swelled to a large size) may deserve some attention from persons, whether ecclesiastical or secular, whose employments are of a similar nature. Let them ask themselves, whether with Gregory's care for the preservation of their rights, (and in that he was as firm and strenuous as Christian

charity allows) they are also like him upright, disinterested, and merciful. And as human malignity has been abundantly gratified in large details of the encroachments and oppressions of churchmen, it falls within the plan of these memoirs, to show that all churchmen have not been thus iniquitous; that those who are humble and evangelically pious, are also, above all men, upright, munificent, and liberal. CENT. VI.

Peter, bishop of Terraco in Spain, had consented to a species of persecution of the Jews in his diocese, by permitting them to be molested in their festivities, and to be more than once driven from the place in which they celebrated them. Let those, who have been led by fashionable historians to annex the idea of persecution to that of the priesthood, take notice, that Gregory bishop of Rome wrote to Peter, to condemn the practice, and to give his decisive opinion, that the Jews should not be in the least molested, that they ought to be won over to the faith by THE SWEETNESS of Gospel-preaching, and by the denunciation of divine judgments against infidelity, and that these were christian arts and methods, while those of a different nature tended only to harden and disgust the human mind*.

To Leander of Seville † he expresses with tears the pressures of his mind under loads of solicitude, and earnestly entreats his prayers. He congratulates him also on the conversion of king Recaredus of Spain, and while he rejoices at the news of that prince's piety and virtues, he admonishes the bishop to watch over the royal convert, that his life may correspond to so hopeful a beginning. He wrote some time after to the same prince, to recommend to him a strong guard over anger, pride, and lust, vices more peculiarly apt to infest princes. Of all the princes of this time, he seems most to have

* B. I. Ep. 34. † Ep. 41.

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adorned the gospel. He was just, munificent, and liberal. And before he left the world he publicly confessed his sins, and appeared to have been possessed of true piety, so far as we can judge. He died about the close of this century.

To Virgilius and Theodorus, bishops of Marseilles, he writes on occasion of the persecuting methods made use of against the Jews. He again bears testimony against the compulsory practices; and declares how sorry he is to find, that many of that people had been brought, by violence rather than by preaching, to the baptismal font. "If a Jew is brought thither by necessity, not by the sweetness of the word, returning to his former superstition, he dies in a worse state than that from which he seemed to be regenerated. Preach frequently to them, that they may desire to be changed, through the love of what they hear. Thus your desire of saving souls will be accomplished, and the convert will not return like the dog to his vomit. Preach, that their dark minds may be illuminated, and that under God they may be brought to real regeneration *."

He wrote also to Pascasius, bishop of Naples, complaining of the violence used to the Jews in driving them from their solemnities. He blames this method, and exhorts to the same purpose as before †. It is well known what different methods, since the time of Gregory, have been supported by the Roman Popes. I appropriate the term Pope to Antichrist, who did not, accurately speaking, exist as yet in the Western church. On the other side Gregory was zealous to suppress the attempts of Jews to seduce Christians, and prohibited their purchasing of Christians for slaves ‡.

The Lombards were a constant scourge to Italy in the time of Gregory, and he was aware of their

* B. I. Ep. 45. † B. II. Ep. 15. ‡ B. II. Ep. 76.

intentions to invade Sicily. Hence he wrote to all the bishops of the island to supplicate the Lord in litanies every fourth and sixth day of the week, and exhorted them not only to draw their flocks to this association of prayer, but also to preach to them the doctrine of repentance. "For if the gracious Lord behold us loving his commands, he is able to defend us from the enemy, and to prepare eternal joys for us *."

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Natalis, bishop of Salonæ, had written to Gregory in defence of the entertainments given by the clergy. The bishop of Rome allows his assertions, but under these important restrictions, "that no absent persons be slandered at these meetings, that none be made an object of ridicule, that the empty discourse of secular business be avoided, that the word of God be read in them, that no more meat and drink be used than is needful for the refreshment of the body, and to fit it for the discharge of duty. If this be your practice, I confess you to be masters of temperance †." But it seems Gregory's animadversions on the feasting of the Salonian clergy had given offence, by that which he adds: "You take it ill to be reprehended by me, who, though I am your superior in church dignity (I do not mean as a man), am willing to be corrected and reproved by all. I thank, indeed, that man as my friend, through whose advice I am enabled to wipe off the blemishes of my soul before the appearance of the awful Judge." One cannot form any great idea of the piety of this Natalis, who had excused himself from assiduous reading of the Scriptures, partly on account of the pressure of tribulations, partly by a mere cavil, because our Lord had told his disciples, that it should be given them in the same hour what they should speak. Gregory informs him, that the Scriptures

* B. IX. 45. Hence I apprehend the origin of the use of the Litany on Wednesdays and Fridays in public worship.

† B. II. 37.

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were given us, that we, through patience and comfort of them, might have hope. How he answers the cavil, it is not necessary to say. "But we cannot be like you," Natalis had said. The bishop of Rome was not to be seduced by such evasive flattery. "The encomiums you bestow on me," said he, "seem to be spoken in derision, because I cannot in truth find them realized in my experience." We see in all this, on one side, a zealous pastor labouring to revive a sense and spirit of godliness in his brethren; on the other, a slothful and false-hearted minister, poorly excusing himself by feigned apologies, from doing the Lord's work with vigour and sincerity.

After having given a beautiful description of charity in writing to Dominicus bishop of Carthage*, he shows how deeply his soul was penetrated with the importance of the pastoral office. In their views of this, many of the antient Fathers, whom we deride for their superstitions, do far excel the generality of pastors in our times. Let him who has entered on this office with merely secular views read, and, if he can, blush and weep, after he has considered, that no age since the Apostles' days has ever seen one more intently and sincerely laborious than Gregory. "Weighty indeed is the office of a Pastor. He must be an example to the flock, and after this he must learn to keep himself humble. He must ever be intent on the ministry of the word, remembering who hath said, OCCUPY TILL I COME. This we then truly execute, when by life and doctrine we gain the souls of our neighbours, strengthen the weak by setting before them the joys of the heavenly kingdom, and bend the proud by sounding aloud the punishments of hell, when we spare none against truth, and when given up to heavenly friendships, we fear not human enmity. I tremble at my own infirmity. How can I sustain

* B. II. 39.

the last judgment, seeing so very little fruit of my labours. Dearest brother, I implore your prayers for me. By the union of charity, we have a common interest." CENT. VI.

To Boniface, bishop of Rhegium, he gives a handsome reproof for boasting of the good deeds he had done. He owned that he rejoiced to hear of his works of mercy. But he was sorry to find, that he himself had spoken of them to many persons. He warns him to take care that he did not mar the whole by ostentation. "What are we, dust and ashes, that we should covet the praise of men? Him you should seek to please, whose coming we expect, and whose retributions will know no end *."

Evangelus, a deacon of the church of Sypontum, had complained to Gregory, that his daughter had been defloured by Felix, the grandson of the bishop of the same name. The bishop of Rome, not without some animadversion on the bishop's careless education of his grandson, ordered, on supposition of the truth of the fact, that Felix should be obliged to marry the young woman, or, in case of refusal, be scourged and confined in a monastery, excommunicated, and remain in a state of penance, and not be suffered to go abroad till farther orders were received from Gregory †. It seemed proper to mention this antient precedent of the practice of spiritual courts. Doubtless, they were, in their origin, courts of censure on immoralities not so easily cognizable in courts of common law. The necessities of society, and the depravity of human nature, seem to require the existence of such tribunals. The Roman office of censor was of the same kind. Nor would mankind be disposed to depreciate them, were they naturally as sincere in their regard for the honour of God and for moral decorum, as they are for the preservation of property. The abuses of these courts among ourselves are well known. But

* B. II. 43. † B. II. 79, 81.

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why persons of rank and property in our country do not labour to regulate them, or rather, do not endeavour to institute a censorship of morals that shall be practicable and effectual,—why they indiscriminately condemn the whole principle, while they permit lewdness to be practised without any restraint,—are questions not hard to be determined. In the mean time, every lover of equity and decency should prefer a spiritual court, armed with some power for the suppression of vice, before the licentiousness, which, under the name of liberty, threatens among ourselves to destroy all the barriers which our ancestors erected against vice and immorality. Severe as Gregory's conduct may now seem, it was wholesome, no doubt, and society felt the good consequences.

In writing to Priscus, a patrician of the East, he justly describes the mixed state of human affairs, and the duties of Christian faith and humility. The thought is common to moralists in all ages; but Gregory ennobled it with real principles of Christianity.

Gregory corresponded also with Theodolinda, the queen of the Lombards: She was the widow of their king Autharit, a zealous Arian. After his death, she married Aigilulfus, a Lombard, whom the nation received as king. Being orthodox herself, she brought over her husband, and the whole nation, at length, to the same persuasion. Gregory congratulated her on the happy prospect of the progress of Christianity among the Lombards. What degree of real piety was in all this, does not appear: the temporal benefit of Gregory's labours was, however, evident in the establishment of peace for some time between the Lombards and the Roman empire*.

Anastasius, bishop of Antioch, seems ever to have been a special favourite of Gregory. He had been

* B. XII. Ep. 7.

ejected from his See by the injustice of Justin, the successor of Justinian, and had lived in exile a number of years. He was at length, however, restored to his situation*, and Gregory wrote a letter to him on the occasion, full of pious and tender sentiments. In this letter, he endeavours to solace the mind of the prelate with the same scriptural views and promises, with which his own had been refreshed under a variety of afflictions. The hope of glory hereafter to be revealed, it is evident, was the spring of joy to his own soul, and enabled him to bear calamities with patience†. In another letter to him, he writes, "You ought to keep in mind, as you do, what is written: 'In the last days perilous times shall come.'—And though in old age you suffer much, remember him, who told St. Peter, that when he was old, another should gird him. Yet, in saying this, I recollect, that from youth you have laboured under many adversities. Numbers rejoice at our sorrows, as you write; but we know who hath said, 'Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.' We feel the performance of the former part, let us expect the latter part also. You say, that some who ought to relieve, add burdens to you; I know there are those who come in sheep's clothing, but who inwardly are ravening wolves. We are not disturbed on account of their ambition in arrogating all honour to themselves, because we trust in the Almighty, whose law and rule is, that those who covet what belongs to others, are sooner on that account deprived of their own. For we know who hath said, 'He that exalteth himself shall be abased,' and, 'a haughty spirit before a fall.' In these days, as I find, new heretical wars arise, which would reduce to nothing the prophets, the gospels, and all the fathers together. But while

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* B. IV. 81. † Evagrius, B. VI. toward the end.

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Anastasius lives, we trust in the grace of our Protector; their swords will be broken in pieces, striking against a rock. The Church, in the mean time, by the subtilty of heretics, is sharpened in her doctrine, and learns the truth more accurately. The heart of God approaches to us, and, by temptations we are brought to feel him more sensibly. What I suffer from the swords of barbarians, and from the perverseness of judges, I spare to relate, that I may not increase the sorrow of him whom I wish to console. But I weigh those words, 'This is your hour, and the power of darkness.' The power of light then shall have its day afterwards; because the elect are the light of the world, and it is written, 'the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning:' hence, all we suffer in the hour and power of darkness is not to be regretted. You wish, if it were possible, that we might converse without pen and ink, and it is a painful circumstance that we are almost as distant from one another as East and West. But truly we by grace are made one. Why wish you for the wings of a dove, which you have already? The wings are the love of God and our neighbour. By them the church flies through the earth: if you had not these wings, you would not have come to me by* your epistles with so much affection.—As your life is necessary to all good men, may you, after a long time, arrive at the joys of the heavenly country!"

I have only to add concerning Anastasius, that he lived five years after his restoration, and died about the end of the century. We are much in the dark concerning the trials of this great and good man. Gregory's words however will stand as proper to be addressed to the suffering children of God in all ages. I conceive the bishop of Antioch to have been a luminary in the East, envied and persecuted extremely, bearing testimony to the faith

* B. VII. Ep. 3.

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of Christ in the decline of the Eastern Church; and that his life and transactions would be very instructive, if they had been transmitted to posterity.

John, the bishop or patriarch of Constantinople, admonished by Gregory for assuming the title of universal bishop.

John, bishop of Constantinople, disturbed in Gregory's time the peace of the Church, by assuming to himself the title of universal bishop *. The pride and arrogance with which he assumed it, was only equalled by the obstinacy with which he persevered. Gregory wrote with much vehemence † against his haughtiness, and on this occasion, laid down some memorable rules of humility, which severely condemned, not himself, but his successors in the Roman See. In what a state must the East have been, to revere as a great saint, both living and dying, so proud a man as John of Constantinople! But their godliness was nearly expiring, and the Mahometan scourge was at hand.

Gregory wrote to Dominicus an African bishop, entreating his prayers, and thanking him for his presents. By this letter it appears that the spirit of true godliness was not yet extinct in Africa ‡. There is another letter to the same person, who, it seems, was bishop of Carthage. It is full of the spirit of charity and devotion, though there is nothing in it that calls for any very particular attention ‖.

Cyriacus succeeded John of Constantinople, whose pride has been mentioned already. At his solemn ordination the people shouted, "this is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Superstition naturally paved the way for the dominion of the Clergy; and the bishops of the great Sees were gradually increasing in secular grandeur. The congratulation just mentioned was calculated to encourage Cyriacus to emulate the ambition of his predecessor. Gregory § justly finds fault with it, in a letter to the great men of Constantinople, shows that the acclamation properly belonged to the stone

* This bishop goes by the name of John *the Faster*.—He died A. D. 595. † B. IV. 82. ‡ B. V. 119. ‖ B. V. 162. § B. VI. 171.

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which the Lord had laid for a foundation in his Church*, and observes that it was impious to ascribe those praises to the creature, which belong to the Creator. Yet he is willing to excuse the mistake as proceeding from a charitable intention. Gregory, no doubt, had himself too high views of the dignity of his own See, and its supposed relation to Saint Peter blinded his judgment. The exaltation of Constantinople, through the domineering pretensions of the late bishop, excited his jealousy; and so subtile and intricate are the motions of the heart, that he himself might not at all be aware of the selfishness which probably influenced his conduct. I doubt not, however, from the unaffected humility of his whole life, that he cordially detested sacerdotal ambition. The excessive dignity of the prelatical character would have done little harm to Christendom, had all prelates been like Gregory. But, as this was not to be expected, the state ought to have set bounds to ecclesiastical encroachments before this period.

Gregoria, a lady of the bed-chamber to Augusta the empress, in her anxiety for her soul, and in the height of her admiration of Gregory, by letter requested him to inform her, if he could, by revelation, that her sins were forgiven her†. Gregory assured her, "that certainty in this matter was not attainable: we must repent and mourn over our sins, and apply for pardon continually." He declares himself unworthy of having such a revelation made to him, and gives her useful and salutary advices, so far as he saw into the system of divine truth. In regard to the doctrine of justification, he seems to have had the same sentiments which Augustine had, and with the same confusion of ideas. How superstition, servility, and darkness prevailed in the Church at this time, is but too evident. Yet Gregory was a luminary, compared with most of his contemporaries.

To a person named Andrew, affecting secular

* Psalm cxviii. 24. † B. VI. Ep. 186.

greatness, he writes with much pathos on the vanity of sublunary things, a subject which he touched with more sensibility, because he was strongly impressed with the idea of the world being nearly at an end*. CENT. VI.

Serenus, bishop of Marseilles, observing that some of his people adored the images which had been placed in churches, in his zeal brake them, and by this conduct gave so much disgust, that many withdrew from his communion. Gregory rebukes him on this account, and wishes him to conciliate the affections of the people, by permitting them to make use of images as pieces of history to instruct their minds in the great facts of Christianity. He advises him to allow them as books for the illiterate people, and at the same time to caution them seriously against paying any adoration to them.—I have stated the substance of the sentiments of both these bishops†. It seems not probable, that those who deserted Serenus on this account, had much Christianity to lose. Gregory had not the opportunity of knowing so well as we do the danger of his advice. Thus far is evident, that image-worship had not generally commenced in Gregory's time, and that HE seriously reprobated the practice. From these facts, however, the gradual approximation to idolatry may be traced, and the danger of such a mode of teaching, as that which Gregory recommends, has been so abundantly proved since his time, that no doubt remains but in this instance the bishop of Marseilles judged better than he. The worship of Images.

The correspondence between Gregory and Brunehalt, the queen of Austrasia or Burgundy, a division of the French monarchy, which took place amidst the confusions of that country after the death of Clovis, will deserve to be succinctly stated‡. She

* B. VI. Ep. 190. † B. VII. 190. B. IX. 9.
‡ B. VII. 113. B. IX. 57. 64.

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was an ambitious, dissolute woman; yet, in that age of superstition, she endeavoured to impose both on herself and on the world by an appearance of piety. She attempted to extend her power while her young male descendants were on the throne; and permitted, or rather encouraged, their vicious conduct, that she might herself keep the reins of government. Gregory, though he commends her respectful attention to the forms of religion, blames her ecclesiastical proceedings in some matters of great moment. He represents, with much earnestness, the irregular and even simoniacal ordinations of pastors in France, and observes, with great energy, the deplorable state of the flocks, and the scandal of all godliness, which must ensue from such conduct. Finding that his remonstrances had little effect, he urges her still more strongly on the same subject, and observes the probability of divine vengeance overtaking her family, if she corrected not these enormities. It is remarkable that this wicked woman was afterwards put to a cruel death, and that her descendants were slain or expelled. From some parts of the more early correspondence between them, one would think that Gregory thought highly of her virtues. Time, however, undeceived him, and it must be confessed, that he treated her with the undissembled plainness which becomes a Christian pastor.

The bodily afflictions of Gregory, in connection with the miseries of the times, are forcibly described by him in a letter to Italica, a patrician lady*.

"I can find nothing else to say of myself, than that as a just punishment of my sins, I have been almost eleven months confined to my bed. I am so oppressed with the gout, that life is a heavy punishment. I faint daily through pain, and breathe after death as my remedy†. Among the clergy and

* B. VII. 127.

† In another letter he speaks of a disorder different from the gout; namely, a grievous burning heat, that spread over

people of the city, scarcely a freeman or a slave is exempt from fevers. Africa and the East are also full of misery and desolation. I see the end of all things approaching; be therefore less solicitous on account of your own calamities. Study with alacrity that godliness, which has the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come." CENT. VI.

In a letter to Eulogius*, bishop of Alexandria, written the year after, he says, "I have been near two years confined to my bed, in constant pain.—Often have I been forced to return to my bed, when I scarcely had left it, by the violence of pain.—Thus I die daily, and yet live. But I am a grievous criminal, and, as such, deservedly shut up in so painful a prison. I daily cry with the Psalmist, Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks to thy name." While he lived, he was frequently thus afflicted; but the vigour of his mind was unabated, and his faculties were unclouded.

Another instance of his bodily sufferings shall close this branch of his story. Writing to his friend Venantius, who was likewise afflicted with the gout, he says, "what ought we to do, but to call our sins to remembrance, and to thank God, that he purifies us by afflicting our flesh.—Let us take care, that we pass not from one degree of torment to another, and let us consider the goodness of God, who threatens us with death, that he may imprint in us an edifying fear of his judgments. How many sinners have continued immersed in sin through life without a head-ach, and have suddenly been cast into hell!"—

all his body, and took away his spirits. By such severe exercises was this good man trained for the kingdom of heaven, and he evidently grew in humility, tender sympathy with others in distress, and ardent breathings for the heavenly country.

* This Eulogius, by preaching and writing, strengthened the hands of the godly in the East, and lessened the influence of heretics. He seems, by Gregory's correspondence with him, to have been a wise and pious pastor, such as in Alexandria and the East were rarely to be found.

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I rejoice to find in this great man the marks of that deep humility, which is known only to true converts, and of that wise improvement of affliction, of which theorists may reason, but which saints only feel. He concludes thus benevolently and piously to his friend: "May the Lord infuse into your soul these words by the inspiration of his Spirit, cleanse you from your iniquities, give you here the joy of his consolation, and eternal reward hereafter*."

Gregory having been informed, that Clementina, a woman of quality, had harboured some suspicions against him, wrote to her in a charitable spirit, and with the intention of effacing the disagreeable impressions. He at the same time mildly reproved her for the want of a placable and forgiving temper. He reminds her of the well-known petition in the Lord's prayer, and delivered several weighty sentiments adapted to the subject†.

On no occasion was Gregory wanting to impress on men's minds the care of the soul. Two persons having requested his assistance in their temporal difficulties, after having said what the case required, he exhorted them not to murmur at the divine dispensations, nor to undertake any thing unjust under the pretence of necessity; but to fix their hope on the mercy of their Redeemer, who forsaketh not those who trust in him, to occupy their minds with divine things, and to repose on him who gives what we have not, repairs what we have lost, and preserves what he has repaired‡.

The subdeacon was an officer of the Church, who superintended, under the bishop of Rome, the distant bishoprics and parishes which belonged to his jurisdiction‖. Gregory wrote to Anthemius, the subdeacon of Campania, that he had heard of Paschasius, a bishop, who was so slothful, that he neglected every pastoral duty, admitted of no advice,

* B. IX. 25. † B. VIII. 16.
‡ B. XI. 23. ‖ B. XI. 29.

and gave himself up to the building of a ship. It seems he used to go down to the sea on this very unclerical employment with one or two of his clergymen, and was held in derision by all the country. Gregory directs his subdeacon to reprimand him in the presence of some presbyters, or gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and try by that method to reform him. Should that prove ineffectual, he enjoins him to send Paschasius to Rome, to answer for himself before Gregory. CENT. VI.

I know not the result; but it seemed worth while to mention the case, as it illustrates the state of the church-discipline of that day, as well as the vigilant attention of Gregory. That so many should nominally sustain the pastoral character, whose taste and genius, as well as disposition and sentiments, are repugnant to it, and who seem qualified to excel in any thing rather than what is sacerdotal, is matter for lamentation. The profane avarice of parents educating their children for the ministry at all events, is one great cause of it.

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GREGORY'S CONDUCT TOWARD THE EMPERORS MAURITIUS AND PHOCAS.

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It is impossible for any impartial person, who has attended to the spirit and conduct of Gregory as exhibited in his pastoral memoirs, not to feel a conviction of the eminent piety, integrity, and humility of this bishop. Yet it has been the fashion to arraign his character with great severity, on account of his conduct in the latter part of his life. He has been accused of great ingratitude toward one excellent and virtuous emperor, and of egregious flattery toward another who was profligate and tyrannical. The evidence already adduced of his disposition and temper should naturally dispose us to receive with much caution such grievous accusations. I shall

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throw together into this chapter the facts on which our judgment is to be founded *.

A series of events had given Gregory a strong prejudice against the government of Mauritius. Their opposition of sentiment had remarkably alienated their spirits from one another, though they once had the most sincere esteem for each other's character. Gregory had been very acceptable to Mauritius, who had strongly favoured his promotion to the bishopric. Nor is there any reason to doubt of the sincerity of the bishop's professions of a very high regard for the emperor, when he made them. Changes of this sort are common amongst mankind, and the declarations which men make at different times of the characters of the same persons, however contradictory, are not to be always charged to insincerity.

Mauritius made a law, to prohibit men, who had held civil offices under the government, from undertaking the administration of the Church. Of this Gregory approved; but a clause in the same law, which forbad military men to enter into monasteries till the time of their service was expired, or till they were disabled for the profession, met not with the same approbation. Gregory, too fond of monastic institutions, and conceiving them necessary for the souls of some, though not of all, expostulated with the emperor on the impiety of the decree. He does so, however, with all possible decency and respect, and lays open his sentiments with a frankness and modesty, which do honour to his character. Doubtless he was mistaken, and the mistake was common to him with the most pious of those times. He promulged, however, the emperor's decree through Italy, and thus, as he himself says, he was faithful to God, at the same time obedient to his prince †.

In this transaction, in which it does not appear that he succeeded with the emperor, the zeal of Gregory was quickened by the strong presentiments of

* See Bower's history of the Popes, Vol. ii. Gregory.

† B. XII. Ep. 100.

the near approach of the day of judgment, which filled his mind. This mistaken notion seems to have dwelt with Gregory; nor was it in him a mere speculation. He was practically serious in the expectation. I find him pressing it in another letter to the nobles and landholders of the island of Sardinia, whom he reproved for suffering their labourers to remain in a state of idolatry. He justly observes, that they were bound in conscience to take care of the spiritual instruction of those who laboured for them in temporal things, and he earnestly exhorts them to promote the charitable work *. The selfishness and insensibility, with which so many, in modern times, can reap lucrative advantages, from the labours of mariners, slaves, and apprentices, with no more attention to their best interests, than if they were of the brute creation, here naturally forces itself on our attention. Other letters of the same kind, demonstrate the zeal of Gregory for the propagation of Christianity among idolaters and infidels.

Italy suffered extremely from the Lombards, as has been observed, and we can form no hopeful idea of the real conversion of Aigilulph, the husband of Theodolinda, since he still ravaged the Roman territories, and filled them with misery and desolation. These evils were a constant source of affliction to the tender spirit of Gregory, yet he failed not to improve them IN HIS HOMILIES, TO THE INSTRUCTION OF HIS FLOCK. Willing to put a stop to the effusion of blood, and averse to shedding even that of the Lombards by nourishing intestine feuds among them, as he might have done, he strove to make peace with Aigilulph, and had even succeeded, when the Exarch of Ravenna, the emperor's governor in Italy, perfidiously brake the peace, and provoked the Lombard king to renew his hostilities. The Exarch himself, finding his own profit in the continuance of the war, was for persevering in it at all events, and his heart was hardened against the sufferings of the

* B. III. 23.

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people, which Gregory deplored. Involved as we find this holy bishop in political concerns far more than it were to be wished, it is yet pleasing to see him uniformly supporting the Christian character. For now a severe trial came upon him. Mauritius, induced by representations from the Exarch, reproached him severely with his conduct, and in effect called him a foolish person. Gregory, humble as he was, felt the indignity, of all others the hardest to be borne by men of understanding. Yet he checked his spirit, and brake not the just bounds prescribed to the Christian and to the subject of an emperor. "While you reprove me," says he, "in sparing you have not spared me. While you politely tax me with simplicity, you doubtless call me a fool. I own the charge. Had I not been so, I should not have come hither to this episcopal scene, to endure what I suffer amidst the Lombard wars.—Indeed if I saw not the daily increase of the calamities of the Romans, I should gladly be silent with respect to personal contempt. But this is my affliction; the same cause which subjects me to the imputation of folly, brings my countrymen under the yoke of the Lombards. And while I am not believed, the strength of the enemy increases mightily. This I suggest to my good Lord, that he may believe of me what evils he pleases, only let him not give his ears to any sort of persons concerning the public good, but regard facts more than words.—I know I am a sinner; I daily offend, and am daily chastised. I trust the chastisement of your displeasure will work for my good at the last day. But let me recount my grievances. First, the peace I had made with Aigilulph, with no loss to the state, is broken. In the next place, soldiers are removed from Rome, some to perish by the enemy, others to defend Perusium, while Rome is exposed to danger. Further, Aigilulph appears with his forces; with these eyes I have seen Romans, like dogs, tied with cords, and dragged to be sold as slaves among the Franks.—As to myself, in the

integrity of my conscience I am not dejected with false accusations; I am prepared to endure all, provided my soul's salvation be not endangered. But it grieves me to the heart, that Gregory and Castorius, who did all that men could do, while Rome was besieged, have fallen under your displeasure on my account. That you threaten me with an awful account at the day of judgment, will require a few words in answer. I beseech you cease from this language. 'Judge nothing before the time,' says that excellent preacher Paul. I only say this in brief, that, unworthy sinner as I am, I rest more on the mercy of Jesus than on your justice. Men are very ignorant of the measures of HIS judgment; perhaps what you commend, he will blame; and what you blame, he will commend. I leave uncertain things; I have recourse to prayers and tears alone, begging that the Lord would rule our pious emperor with his hand, and acquit him at that awful judgment; at the same time that he would teach me so to please men, that I lose not his eternal grace *."

The pride of John, bishop of Constantinople.

I have already mentioned the jealous uneasiness of Gregory at the pride of John, bishop of Constantinople. The title of Universal Bishop, had upon his own application been conferred upon him in an Eastern council, and the policy of some former emperors had induced them to compliment the prelates of Constantinople with it; because the honour and influence of the imperial city were augmented by this means. Gregory was the more vexed at this, because the synod of Chalcedon † had offered the same title to the Roman bishops, and they had not accepted it. He in his letters called himself the servant of the servants of God. Such humility might have been thought affected in a person not eminent for this grace. Doubtless it would have been more prudent in him not to have assumed it. But it continues to this day the title of his successors, a

* B. IV. Ep. 75. † B. IV. Ep. 76.

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standing mark of egregious hypocrisy! That which deceived Gregory in this case was the erroneous notion of the pre-eminence of his own See, as belonging to St. Peter; yet I no way doubt but he sincerely abhorred the pride of the Eastern prelate. Had he himself, however, been more completely humble and less superstitious, he would have suffered the affair to pass with greater indifference. While in one respect we behold this good man acting the patriot and the Christian, relieving the distressed, and ransoming the captives with unbounded liberality, nominally possessing great ecclesiastical wealth, but employing it all to the most beneficent purposes, and sparing no labour or fatigue; in another we see him writing and negotiating with persevering vehemence concerning a title, in which, though his cause was unquestionably just, his eagerness was unnecessarily sanguine. He solicited the emperor Mauritius on the subject, but in vain. And this was an additional cause of the prejudices, which they imbibed against each other.

Mauritius cannot be vindicated in supporting the odious pride of John against the just demands of Gregory. The evil, by the countenance of the emperor, continued, and John's successor assumed the same Anti-Christian title. But Gregory had still more weighty causes of complaint, and such as his episcopal duty called on him to lay before the emperor.

This he did in a letter to Constantia, the empress. "Knowing," says he, "that there were many Gentiles * in Sardinia, that they worshipped idols, and that the clergy were remiss in preaching our Redeemer to them, I sent a bishop from Italy thither, who, the hand of the Lord being with him, brought over many of them to the faith. I am informed, that those, who persevere in idolatry, give a fee to the judge of the island, that they may be allowed to do so with impunity. Some, having been baptized,

* The term means idolaters in the language of the fathers. B. IV. Ep. 77.

and ceasing to worship idols, are still obliged to pay the same fine to the judge*: who, when the bishop blamed him, answered, that he had paid so much money for the purchase of his office, that he could not recover his expenses but by such perquisites. The island of Corsica also is oppressed with such exactions and grievances, that the inhabitants are scarcely able to pay the tributes even by the sale of their children. Hence a number of proprietors in the island, relinquishing the Roman government, are reduced to put themselves under the protection of the Lombards. For what more grievous oppression can they suffer from the barbarians than to be obliged to sell their children?—I know that the emperor will say, that the whole produce of the revenue in these islands is applied to the support and defence of Italy. Be it so; but a divine blessing ought not to be expected to attend the gains of sin." He wrote again to the empress, against the pride of John, and speaks superstitiously on the merits of St. Peter, while he laments his own unworthiness. Twenty-seven years, he observes, the Roman church had suffered from the desolation of the Lombards; and its daily expenses, partly on account of the war, and partly in the support of the indigent, were incredibly great.

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* Gregory was much afflicted to find, that almost all the peasants of the islands were still idolaters. Januarius, bishop of Cagliari, was indolent; the slaves belonging to his own church were idolaters; the other bishops of the province were equally negligent. Hospiton, the chief of the barbarians, had, however, received the Gospel; and to him Gregory recommended his missionaries, exhorting him to exert himself for the salvation of his countrymen. Gregory rebuked Januarius for his neglect of discipline in general, though he had exercised it severely in one instance, in which he had met with a personal affront. The world is still the same; I could wish that what has been mentioned did not give just cause to the reader, to recollect not only the state of religion in the West Indies, but nearer at home, in Ireland, in which, notwithstanding there are such a number of bishoprics and churches, a superstitious and idolatrous religion prevails to this day.

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Gregory had also other just causes of complaint against the emperor. Property, he saw, was entirely fluctuating and insecure on account of oppressive exactions, insidious proceedings in wills, and various artifices employed by the emperor's ministers*. These evils were constantly practised in Italy, and Gregory had deplored them in vain.

Evagrius delivers a very pompous encomium on the character of Mauritius†. But his praise is declamatory and vague, and liable to the suspicion of flattery, as Mauritius was then living. After all due allowances made on account of the emperor's distance from Italy, it is impossible to vindicate his conduct. He wanted not military virtues, and had some sense of religion. But avarice was the predominant feature of his character; and how much this vice prevails to eclipse all laudable qualities in a man, was never more illustrated than in the conduct of Mauritius. Chagan, king of the Avares, a Scythian nation on the banks of the Danube, offered, for a ransom, to liberate some thousands of prisoners. He even proposed to do it at a low price; but Mauritius would not part with his money, and the barbarian in a rage massacred all his prisoners. Mauritius, though covetous, was not inhuman: he was struck with horror at the news, and besought God, that his punishment might be in this life, not in the next. His prayer was answered in the former part of it undoubtedly, and I hope also in the latter. As he had alienated the affections of his soldiers by his refusal to supply their wants, they elevated Phocas, a centurion, to the Imperial throne. Mauritius fled, but was seized, and inhumanly murdered with his wife and family. Five of his sons were slain in his sight before he himself received the fatal stroke. The little spark of divine grace, which for years seems to have maintained a dubious existence in a heart, by nature extremely avaricious, was fanned into a

* B. XI. Ep. 36. † Toward the close of his history.

flame by the keen blast of wholesome affliction. Mauritius bore the scene with silent resignation, repeating only, as each of his children was butchered, "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and true are thy judgments." A nurse, who took care of his youngest son, placed her own in its room: Mauritius detecting the generous fraud, discovered it to the executioners, and prevented its effect.—This is a transaction of civil history, but it falls in with our plan. The great faults of one, who had a latent spark of grace within him, were punished in this life by the wickedness of the monster Phocas, and the story deserves to be remembered as a beacon to warn professors of godliness against the love of the world. Mauritius seems to have profited abundantly by the scourge, and to have died in such a frame of mind as belongs only to a Christian. We are not apt to be aware of the advantages which society receives from Christianity. Let us suppose this emperor to have been totally unacquainted with, or entirely averse to Christian principles. How immensely more pernicious his natural disposition would have been, unchecked internally, as well as externally, can scarcely be conceived. CENT. VI.

The images of Phocas and of his wife Leontia, were sent to Rome, and received with much respect by the people, and by Gregory himself. It cannot be supposed, that the bishop of Rome could be acquainted with the personal character of Phocas, who was in truth a man of extraordinary wickedness; and the late transactions at Constantinople would naturally be misrepresented to him in the accounts transmitted thence. Prejudiced as he was against Mauritius, and willing to hope better things from the new emperor, he wrote him a congratulatory letter, in which he studiously avoided saying any thing on the detail of circumstances, of which he must have been very insufficiently informed, and dwelt on that which was certain, namely, the adorable hand of Divine Providence in changing the times, and in trans-

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ferring kingdoms, as he pleases. He exults in the prospect which he had too eagerly formed of a wise, just, and pious administration. He modestly hints at the great abuses of the late government, and exhorts Phocas to redress them, reminding him, "that a Roman emperor commands freemen, and not slaves*." Such is the substance of his letter, in which I see nothing unworthy of the piety and patriotism of Gregory, but much of his wonted care for the good of the church and the public.

Gregory wrote again to Phocas, to apologize for the want of a deacon, who should reside at Constantinople. Phocas had complained to him of this, and invited him to send one. The bishop informed him, that the severity of the late government had deterred all clergymen from going thither. But, as he now hoped better things, he sent him a person, whom he recommended to his protection. He beseeches Phocas to listen to his relation of facts, as he would thence learn more distinctly the miseries which Italy had sustained without redress, for thirty-five years, from the Lombards†. Is it at all surprising, that this language should be used by a man who sincerely loved his country, and knew little of the new emperor; who probably had received a false account of his actions and character, and who had so long been, on Christian principles, both patient and loyal to an oppressive government?

In another letter to Leontia he is not to be excused from the charge of an unhappy superstition. He talks of Peter the Apostle, reminds her of the scripture-text, on the perverted use of which hangs the whole structure of the papacy‡, and of his intercession in heaven. He prays, that she and her husband may be endowed with princely virtues, and expresses, I will not say with flattery, but with an expectation much too sanguine, his hopes of the blessings of the new administration.

* B. XI. Ep. 36. † B. XI. Ep. 43. ‡ Matt. xvi. 18.

Phocas was displeased with Cyriacus, the bishop of Constantinople, because he had generously interested himself in favour of the remaining branches of Mauritius's family; and while he courted the favour of Gregory and of the Romans at a distance, he tyrannized at home in an uncommon manner. But Gregory died the next year after Phocas's promotion, and had not, probably, time enough to know his genuine character, and was himself also so bowed down with pains and infirmities, that he was unable to answer a letter of Theudelinda, queen of the Lombards. He had promised to do it, if his health was restored; but he grew less and less capable of business till he died. Had health and opportunity permitted, the vigour and piety of his character give me no room to doubt, that he would have rebuked the Roman tyrant in such a manner, as to have quite silenced the accusations, which, on this account, have been thrown upon him. That he should have opposed the usurpation of Phocas, will not be expected from those who consider the views of the primitive Christians, who intermeddled not with politics; but he, who plainly rebuked Mauritius, would certainly not have spared his successor, whose conduct was far more blamable*. CENT. VI.

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GREGORY'S CONDUCT WITH RESPECT TO ENGLAND.

THIS also has been a source of much accusation against the Roman prelate. Protestant writers, in their zeal against popery, have censured his domi- CHAP. VII.

* Phocas took away the title of universal bishop from the prelate of Constantinople, and granted it to Boniface III, the next successor but one to Gregory. After Phocas's death, the prelate of the East re-assumed the title. The two bishops each preserved it, and with equal ambition strove for the pre-eminence.

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neering spirit with acrimony, as if the British Christians had been protestants, and the Roman Christians papists, accurately speaking. But Gregory was no pope, nor had the Britons separated from the general Church, and formed a purer establishment of their own. Superstition and ecclesiastical power, in the excess, adhered indeed to the conduct of the Roman prelate, as the fault of the age, not of his temper; and if he had perfectly avoided the fashionable evils of his time, he would have been, I had almost said, more than human. But the ideas, peculiarly popish, were not yet matured in the churches. Dissenting writers, I find, have been seduced by the same sort of prejudices as divines of the Church of England, and it is curious to observe, how different writers can find in the features of the British Church, the very figure of their own denomination. I ought to profit by the mistakes of others; that is, to forget my own times and connections; to transplant myself into the age of which I write; to make liberal allowances for its customs and prejudices, and to enable the reader, from facts themselves, to form his own judgment.

For near a century and a half the Gospel of Christ had been declining in Britain, and for the greatest part of that time had been, as we have seen, confined to Wales and Cornwall, or to the mountains of Scotland. Ireland too still preserved something of the light, while the Angles or Saxons, our ancestors, destroyed every evangelical appearance in the heart of the island. No barbarians were ever more ferocious or more idolatrous; and the Britons, who escaped their ravages, oppressed one another with civil broils. Being favoured with some cessation from their wars with the Saxons, they lost by degrees all traces of former piety, though the form of Christianity still remained. One proof among others, which the old historian Gildas gives of their entire want of Christian zeal is, that they took not the least

pains for the conversion of the Saxons. Seven Saxon kingdoms, called the Heptarchy, were now formed, altogether ignorant and idolatrous, while the few British churches were inattentive to the propagation of Christian truth in the island. And the Saxons continued, some of them for a century, others more than two centuries, immersed in darkness *. CENT. VI.

One cannot, from these circumstances, form any agreeable idea either of the piety or of the knowledge of the British Christians. Nor are the excuses which our protestant historians are inclined to make for their want of zeal, at all satisfactory. It has been said that, "The hostilities of the Angles would cause such attempts to be arduous;" but let the reader only reflect how such difficulties were surmounted by zealous and charitable Christians in former ages †. I cannot but therefore subscribe to the testimony of our antient historians ‡, "that much worthier pastors were sent by the divine goodness, through whom, those, whom God had foreknown, might believe to salvation." A testimony as evangelical in its language, as it is solid in fact.

Gregory's Mission to Britain.

It was about 150 years after the arrival of the Saxons in Britain, that Gregory sent his famous mission into our island, toward the close of the sixth century. It was no sudden thought, but the effect of much deliberation. Even before his consecration at Rome, walking one day in the forum, he saw some very handsome youths exposed to sale. Asking of what country they were, he was informed they were of the island of Britain. "Are the inhabitants of that island Christians or Pagans?" They are Pagans, was the reply. Alas! said he, deeply sighing, that the prince of darkness should possess countenances so luminous, and that so fair a front should carry minds destitute of eternal grace. What is the

* Bede. † See Warner's Eccl. Hist. towards the beginning.
‡ Bede.

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name of the nation? Angli, it was said. In truth they have angelic countenances, and it is a pity they should not be coheirs with angels in heaven. What is the province from which they come?" Deira, that is Northumberland, he was told. It is well, said he, De irâ, snatched from the wrath of God, and called to the mercy of Christ. "What is the name of their king?" Ella, was the answer. Playing upon the name, "Alleluia should be sung to God in those regions*." Impressed with the importance of the object, he earnestly entreated the then Roman bishop to send a mission to the island, offering himself as one ready for the task. Nothing but the officious benevolence of the Roman citizens prevented the work at that time. Gregory was too much beloved at Rome to be allowed to leave it.

It was the character of Gregory to pursue with unwearied attention any plan or scheme of piety or discipline, which he had once conceived. After his consecration, in the year 595 he directed a presbyter, whom he had sent into France, to instruct some young Saxons of seventeen or eighteen years of age, in Christianity. He intended to prepare them for the mission into our island; and in the year 597 he actually sent missionaries thither. They were a number of monks, at the head of whom was one named Augustine. In obedience to Gregory's directions, they proceeded on their journey; but their hearts failed them, when they reflected on the difficulties

Missions to England. A. D. 597.

* I leave to fastidious sceptics, such as the historian Hume, to sneer at Gregory's want of taste in these several allusions. The candid reader will impute them to the times, not to the man; and the devout and charitable will adore the goodness of God, which was beginning to provide such precious benefits for our country; benefits, which call for ceaseless gratitude to the Author of all good, and should endear the memory of the Roman prelate to our latest posterity. An elegant epigram on Milton, by a countryman of Gregory, turns on the same conceit:

Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, mos, si pietas sic,
Non Anglus, verum herclè, Angelus ipse fores.

and dangers to which they thought themselves likely to be exposed. The faith and zeal and simplicity of a Christian missionary were at this time grown rare in the world; and Augustine was sent back by the rest, to entreat Gregory to discharge them from the service. The prelate wrote exhortatory letters, advising them to proceed in confidence of divine aid. He informed them, that it had been better not to have begun a good work, than to recede from it afterwards. He entreated them not to be deterred by the labour of the journey, nor by the breath of malevolence. He set before them the heavenly prospects, and prayed that he himself might see the fruit of their labour in the eternal country. For though, says he, I cannot labour with you, may I at the same time be found in the joy of retribution, because I am willing to labour! Nor did he neglect any means proper to accommodate the missionaries: he recommended them to the attention of Etherius, bishop of Arles, and secured them all the assistance in France, that might expedite their passage into Britain, and every convenience which they needed. Thus animated, they arrived in Britain *.

There was, however, a remarkable concurrence of providential circumstances which facilitated the work, and gave it a more expeditious success than might have been expected from appearances. It is very observable, how much the Lord has made use of women in the propagation of the Gospel among idolaters. To former instances of this sort, we must add, that two queens were concerned in this work, one of whom was the infamous Brunehout, whose correspondence with Gregory has been noticed. Desirous to cover her vices by the appearance of religion, she had, at Gregory's request, given the missionaries every possible assistance. The other, a character on whom the mind will dwell with pleasure, was Bertha, the only daughter of

* Bede, B. I.

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Caribert, king of Paris, a descendant of Clovis. Ethelbert, to whom she had been married in his father's lifetime, was now king of Kent, and one of the most wise and powerful of the Saxon princes. He had not been allowed to marry the French princess but on the express stipulation, that she should be permitted to make free profession of Christianity, in which she had been educated. She brought over with her a French bishop to the court of Dorobernium, now Canterbury. Her principles were firm and sound: her conduct was worthy of the Christian name; and her influence over her husband was considerable. Her zealous piety was not inferior to that of the queen Clovis, which had been attended with such happy consequences in France; and every thing conspired to favour the missionaries.

Ethelbert assigned Augustine a habitation in the isle of Thanet. Here he remained at first with his associates, who were nearly forty. By the direction of Gregory, they had taken with them French interpreters, by whose means they informed the king, that they were come from Rome *, and brought him the best tidings in the world, eternal life to those who received them, and the endless enjoyment of life with the living and true God. After some days, Ethelbert paid them a visit; but being apprehensive of enchantments, he took care to receive them in the open air, where he thought he should be safer than in a house. The missionaries met him, singing litanies for their own salvation, and that of those for whose sake they came thither †. Sitting down by the king's direction, they preached to him and

* Bede, B. I. Ep. 25, &c.

† As I write not the history of superstition, but of Christian religion, I think not myself obliged to copy all the accounts I meet with in antient records which relate to the former. Justice, in the extreme, has been done to them by other writers.

his attendants the word of life. I cannot produce the smallest extract of the sermon; but that it explained the fundamentals, at least, of the Gospel, there seems no reason to doubt. One may form some idea of it by the king's answer, which was to this effect, "They are fine words and promises, which ye bring, but because they are new and uncertain, I cannot afford my assent to them, nor relinquish those religious practices which I myself, together with all the English nation, have for so long a time observed. But as ye are come hither from a great distance, and as I seem to discover that ye are willing to communicate to us those things, which ye believe to be true and most excellent, we are not willing to disturb you, but rather to receive you in a friendly manner, and to afford you what may be necessary for your support; nor do we hinder you from uniting all, whom ye can persuade by preaching, to the faith of your religion." He gave them a mansion in the royal city of Canterbury, with all necessary accommodations, and the license of preaching the word. As they approached the city, they sang in concert this litany; We pray thee, O Lord, in all thy mercy, that thine anger and thy fury may be removed from this city, and from thy holy house, because we have sinned. Alleluia. CENT. VI.

Certainly the human mind was in a debased and childish state at this time throughout a great part of the world. It had long been sinking in its power and taste. The heathen philosophers and orators of these times appear no way superior to Christian authors and pastors, in the use and cultivation of the understanding. Such men as Gregory and his missionaries should not be compared with Cicero and Demosthenes, but with their own contemporaries; and had this been done by writers who treat them with perfect contempt, the injustice of that contempt would have appeared. It must be expected, that the work of divine grace in different ages, will, in

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its effects and manifestations, exhibit the complexion and colour of the objects with which it is surrounded. The subtilty of Satan will not fail to take every possible advantage of this circumstance, and I can believe that even more superstitions than those recorded by Bede attended the labours of the Roman missionaries. In our own times of refinement, evils far more plausible, but not less pernicious, accompany the same salutary work. I have not, however, observed any thing idolatrous, or otherwise directly subversive of Christianity, to have yet prevailed in any of the fashionable superstitions. These things being premised, let us consider what most probably was the doctrine preached by Augustine; I say probably, since the wretched narratives from which I draw my information have given no account. That eternal salvation and forgiveness of sin by the blood of the Lamb, was his capital doctrine, seems evident in a great measure from Ethelbert's observation of the good news which they brought. I may still more confidently say, that his sermon was not a system of moral duties. For how could that be called good news? All the difficulty with Ethelbert was, to believe what they promised; the very same difficulty which strikes all unrenewed minds at the first hearing of the Gospel. And when to this we add what we certainly know of Gregory's sentiments, and consider Augustine as preaching according to his views, the evidence seems to rise even beyond probability. Ethelbert, a prudent and sensible prince, though as yet at least, by no means convinced of the truth of Christianity, sees no suspicious mark in the language and conduct of the preachers. The air of genuine sincerity is simple, and above the possibility of imitation. Candid and intelligent minds perceive it almost intuitively. The king of Kent could see no selfish motive that was likely to influence these men. They spake with an earnestness that showed their own conviction of the

excellency of their doctrine, and their desire of profiting their fellow-creatures. Not an atom of gain was to be acquired to the See of Rome: the whole mission was disinterested. Hence the candid prince was induced to give them countenance; and the Gospel appears to have been preached by these missionaries with plainness and sincerity. CENT. VI.

Their conduct at Canterbury was correspondent to these beginnings. They prayed, fasted, watched, preached the word of life to all, as opportunity served: they lived as men above the world: received nothing from those whom they taught, except necessaries: they practised what they taught, and showed a readiness to suffer, or even to die, for the truth which they preached. Some believed and were baptized, admiring their innocent lives, and tasting the sweetness of their doctrine. Near the city there was an old church, built in the times of the Romans, in which queen Bertha was wont to pray. In this the missionaries first held their assemblies, sang, prayed, preached, and baptized, till, the king himself being converted to the faith *, they obtained a larger licence of preaching every where, and of building or repairing churches. When he himself, among others, delighted with the holiness of their lives, and the preciousness of Gospel promises, confirmed by many miracles †, believed and was baptized, numbers crowded to hear, and received the word. The king, congratulating the new converts, declared that he would compel no man to become a Christian; however he embraced those who did so with a more intimate affection as fellow-heirs of the grace of life. For the

* I hope Bede's expression (B. I. Ep. 26,) is true in the proper sense of the words.

† What shall be said concerning these miracles? The credulity of that age should not lead one to deny all that is said of them. It was a new scene: Evangelists were preaching among pagans. Certain it is, that every one concerned in those scenes believed their reality.

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missionaries had taught him, that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not compulsive. He now gave to them a settlement in Canterbury, suited to their station, with all necessary accommodations.

Augustine ordained archbishop of the English nation.

Augustine returning into France, received ordination, as the archbishop of the English nation, from the bishop of Arles, and returning into Britain, sent Laurentius the presbyter, and Peter the monk, to acquaint Gregory with his success, and to receive answers to various questions. To his inquiries concerning the maintenance of the clergy, Gregory answered, that the donations made to the Church were, by the customs of the Roman See, divided into four portions, one for the bishop and his family to support hospitality, a second to the clergy, a third to the poor, a fourth to the reparation of churches: that as the pastors were all monks, they ought to live in common, with a remarkable exception, which proves that the absolute prohibition of marriage, one of the marks of Antichrist*, was not yet enjoined the clergy, namely that those of them who preferred the marriage state, might be allowed to marry, and receive their maintenance out of the monastery. To another question, which related to the diversity of customs and liturgies in different churches, the answer of Gregory was liberal; namely, that the new bishop was not bound to follow the precedent of Rome, but that he might select whatever parts or rules appeared the most eligible, and best adapted to promote the piety of the infant Church of England, and compose them into a system for its use. A number of other questions and answers are recorded likewise, too uninteresting to deserve a place here†. Yet amidst the childish superstition of the times, the enlightened mind of Gregory appears; and his occasional comment on St. Paul's words, concerning the law in his members warring against the law of his mind, in which

* 1 Tim. iv. † Bede, B. I. C. 27.

the bishop understands the Apostle as describing himself to be free and enslaved at the same time, with a double respect to his natural and spiritual state, evinces the solidity of his evangelical knowledge. CENT. VI.

Augustine having intimated, that the harvest was plenteous, but that the labourers were few, Gregory sent him more missionaries, and directed him to constitute a bishop at York, who might have other subordinate bishops; yet, in such a manner, that Augustine of Canterbury should be metropolitan of all England. Such were the rudiments of the English church.—Gregory has been censured for excessive eagerness in settling a plan of ecclesiastical government for places as yet not in the least evangelized: and it must be owned, that this extreme care of subordination and uniformity does seem premature; but the spirit of the times favoured such hasty external institutions.

Gregory thought long and deeply of this his favourite infant Church; and wrote to Mellitus, one of the missionaries going to Britain, an account of the fruits of his meditations; which were *, that the idol-temples being purged of their uncleanness, should be converted into churches for the use of the natives, in which they might worship God, according to the Gospel. And reflecting that they had been wont to sacrifice to dæmons, and in their sacrifices to indulge themselves in feasts, he directs that, setting apart all sacrifices, and whatever was connected with idolatry, they might be allowed on the day of the Church's dedication, or on the martyrdom of Saints, to make booths for themselves in the neighbourhood of the churches, and enjoy themselves in temperate banquets. This latter direction appears dangerous; the reason he assigns for it is, that the English, if they found their usual entertainments to be altogether prohibited, might be

* Bede, B. I. C. 30.

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induced to relapse into idolatry. I cannot compare Gregory's compliances to the Jesuitical artifices practised in after ages among the Chinese, because it appears that idolatry was absolutely prohibited, and the real Christian religion taught in Britain; but a man who knew human nature so well as this bishop did, might have foreseen the practical excesses which his license would encourage, and should have committed to God himself the success of his own cause among the English.

Hearing from Augustine of his miraculous powers, Gregory, who seems to have entertained no doubt of their reality, cautions him excellently against pride and presumption on their account, informs him that they were given him more for the sake of the new converts than of himself, and teaches him the all-important lesson of humility. He wrote also to Ethelbert, to congratulate, instruct, and exhort him, setting before him the example of the great Constantine, and pressing him to extend the propagation of the Gospel*. His zeal was much

* Hume (Chap. I. of his History of England) represents this exhortation to extend the propagation of the Gospel as inconsistent with the conduct of Augustine, "who had thought proper in the commencement of his mission, to assume the appearance of the greatest lenity." Thus it is that men, more malignant than intelligent in Christian history, pervert facts, and represent pious men as hypocritical in their moderate conduct. The truth is, neither Constantine, nor Theodosius, nor Gregory, nor any of the ancients, ever compelled any man to become a Christian, either in the beginning or progress of religion. Nor does any thing of the kind appear in Gregory's letter to Ethelbert. But he, like Theodosius, directed that the worship of idols should be destroyed. Men were allowed to remain aloof all their days from Christianity, if they pleased. Forced conversions, like those of popery in after ages, were as yet unknown, and persecution, the other mark of Antichrist, as yet existed not in the Church. It is very possible that the indifferent spirit of our times may be disgusted with that part of the conduct of Theodosius and Gregory, which related to the destruction of idols, and call it persecution. Be it so: I have (in Chap. XVI. Cent. IV.) examined this point with as much exactness as

animated by the near prospect which he himself had of the end of the world, and of which he failed not to inform the king of Kent*: the latter reigned fifty years, and died in 616. As a statesman he was great, as a Christian greater still. And few princes in any age were richer blessings to their subjects than Ethelbert and Bertha. CENT. VI. A. D. 616.

But this fine gold was not without some alloy! Before these events there existed, in Wales particularly, a British church. Augustine, willing to establish a uniformity of discipline and customs in the island, invited the Welsh bishops to a conference, and began to admonish them to enter into Christian peace and concord, that with hearts united they might join in evangelizing the pagans. The Britons observed Easter at a season different from that of the Roman Church, and did many other things contrary to her customs. The conference proved fruitless; the Britons would hearken to no prayers or exhortations; and Augustine in the close had recourse to a miraculous sign†. A blind man was introduced to be healed. We are told that the Britons had no success; but that Augustine's prayers were heard, and his sight was restored. The Britons were induced to confess, that Augustine was sent of God, but pleaded the obstinacy of their people, as a reason for their non-compliance.—

I can. But let not men of sincere piety and fervent charity for the good of souls, be represented as if they were hypocritical in their moderation at first, and as if they intended to establish tyranny afterwards. Their plan was, whether it be agreeable to present reigning maxims or not, to compel no man to receive Christianity, and at the same time to render the practice of idolatry impracticable. I believe many, who have written against them as persecutors, have not distinctly understood this distinction. All I contend for here is this, they acted consistently and uprightly.

* Gregory had already written to queen Bertha, and stimulated her zeal to labour for the conversion of her husband.—Id. C. 32.

† Bed. B. II. C. 2.

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A second synod was appointed, attended by seven British bishops, and many of their learned men, belonging to the famous monastery at Bangor, of which Dinoth was at that time the abbot. Before these came to the synod, they asked the advice of a person of reputed sanctity, whether they should give up their own traditions on the authority of Augustine or not. Let humility, said he, be the test, and if you find, when you come to the synod, that he rises up to you at your approach, obey him; if not, let him be despised by you. On so precarious an evidence, it seems, did he rest the proof of humility. It happened, that Augustine continued sitting on their arrival, which might easily have taken place without any intentional insult: the Britons were however incensed, and would hearken to no terms of reconciliation. Augustine proposed to them to agree with him only in three things, leaving other points of difference undecided, namely, to observe Easter at the same time with the rest of the Christian world, to administer baptism after the Roman manner, and to join with Augustine in preaching the Gospel to the English. In all other things, says he, we will bear you with patience. The Britons were inexorable, and refused to acknowledge his authority. "If you will not have peace with brethren, said the archbishop of Canterbury, roused at length into an unbecoming warmth, you will have war with enemies; and if you will not preach to the English the way of life, you will suffer death at their hands." It happened afterwards, that, in an invasion of the Pagan Saxons of the North, the Bangorian monks were cruelly destroyed, though long after the death of Augustine. He died in peaceable possession of the See of Canterbury, after having lived to see the Gospel propagated with increasing success. He ordained Mellitus and Justus bishops; London was brought into the pale of the Church, and the southern parts of

the island found the benefit of his labours, and of those of his auxiliaries. CENT. VI.

I shall close the story of English affairs with the death of Augustine, which happened early in the 7th century. And as the ground I am now upon has been disputed, I am willing to lay open all the information which antiquity can give us. Let us hear some other accounts of these transactions.

Writers, who have been studious of the honour of our country, tell us, that when Augustine came into England, he found seven bishops and an archbishop supplied with godly governors and abbots, and that the church was in goodly order, at Bangor particularly: that Dinoth the abbot showed Augustine that they owed him no subjection; that their bishops had been independent of Rome: that the bishops of Rome had no more right to their obedience than other Christians had, and that the bishop of Caerleon upon Usk was their proper superior *; and that in revenge for this honest assertion of their independency, the Kentish king procured the invasion and slaughter of the British monks mentioned above.

How Christianity was afterwards propagated in our island, and how the disputes between the Roman and British churches terminated, will properly fall under our consideration hereafter. In the mean time, the injustice of a certain writer † to the memory of Gregory, in accusing him of exercising tyranny over the British Church, is very glaring. We have, by an early association of ideas, been so habituated to condemn every thing that is Roman in religion, that we are not easily open to conviction on this subject. It should, however, be remembered, that not the least revenue could accrue to Gregory from the conversion of Britain; nor did he

* Galfridus Monometensis, B. IV. C. 12. See Nicholls on the Common Prayer.

† Bower's Lives of Popes, Vol. II. Gregory.

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suggest or intimate any lucrative plan, directly or indirectly. If there were any improper steps taken, they must not be charged to a selfish or interested spirit, such as that which has since animated the papacy. The doctrines avowedly and earnestly taught by Gregory and his followers, were the doctrines of Grace; and though no account of the faith of the Welsh monks is given us, there is great reason, on account of the Pelagian leaven of our island, to fear it was not so truly Christian as that of Gregory. That they were uncharitable, appears incontestable from their neglect of the Saxon pagans, and their obstinate refusal to hearken to any advice on that head. And the reader has already had a view of their manners, very different from the flattering account of Galfridus. The extent of the British Church, before the arrival of Augustine, was so inconsiderable, that when Gregory planned the hierarchy of this island, it is probable he knew little of the very existence of such a Church. The fault of ambitious encroachment must, therefore, be laid to Augustine. Seduced he undoubtedly was, according to the common superstition of the age, by an excessive zeal for uniformity. And that admirable method of uniting zeal for establishments with a spirit of toleration, which was discovered toward the close of the last century, was as yet unknown. The Britons had been independent, and they had a right to continue so; but I believe, from all appearances, that Augustine's desire to make a connection with the Romans sprang from charitable views.

What could be the meaning of his wishing the Britons to baptize after the Roman manner? This question has exercised the critical talents of authors. After all, as baptism by trinal immersion was then the Roman mode, this seems to give the most natural account of the circumstance.

The charge of Galfridus, in accusing the Romans

of employing the pagans to murder the British, is too absurd to merit any serious notice. Augustine died long before it happened. Gregory himself was deceased before the controversies between Augustine and Dinoth took place. He has been accused of extreme inconsistency, in being imperious toward heretics, and indulgent toward pagans * and Jews. But a more exact acquaintance with cases would enable men to form a better judgment. Gregory, like all real good men, was averse to use violent methods in proselyting; he knew that conversion, if sincere, must be voluntary. But when men once have been received into the Christian pale, the same zeal which laboured for their conversion, is studious for their uniform attachment to Christian fundamentals. It was no breach of charity in Gregory to attempt to hinder the promotion of a Donatist in the Christian church in Africa, and such an attempt was very consistent with that charity which forbad the persecution of the Jews. CENT. VI.

On the whole, Gregory's conduct with respect to our island appears one of the most shining efforts of Christian charity. His missionaries, in general, acted laudably; and the real establishment of Christianity was, under God, effected by their means. There was a stain of rivalry and jealousy, as we have seen, which appeared in their conduct; but they were men.

CHAP. VIII.

THE WORKS OF GREGORY.

THIS great prelate, worn out at length with labours and diseases, slept in Jesus in the year 604†, after he had enjoyed, shall I say—or endured his bishopric thirteen years and six months? No man CHAP. VIII. Death of Gregory. A. D. 604.

* Bower. † Fleury, Vol. IV. B. XXXVI. 51.

CHAP. VIII.

in any age ever gave himself up more sincerely to the service of God, and the benefit of his fellow-creatures. Power in him was a voluntary servitude, undertaken not for himself, but for all the world. Even the growth of superstition, with which he was strongly infected, while it secured to him the cheerful obedience of the laity, contributed nothing to his ease or secular emolument. The belief of the Roman bishops succession to Peter, which he found prevalent in Europe, was accidentally strengthened by his eminent piety and his laborious virtues.

Had he even been disposed to extend his authority to much greater lengths, all the world would have been prone to submit to his decrees; so firmly was the opinion of his integrity established among men. His conscience, however, would not suffer him to carry any thing farther than precedents had sanctioned; and who, especially in an age of superstitious credulity, could doubt the justice of his pretensions, while the pre-eminence was so painful, so disinterested, and so beneficially exerted?

For I cannot persuade myself to call him Pope. He pretended not to any thing like infallibility, nor did he ever attempt any thing like a secular domination. The seeds of Antichrist were vigorously shooting indeed; and the reputation of Gregory doubtless contributed much to mature the poisonous plant. But idolatry, spiritual tyranny, and the doctrine of the merit of works, the three discriminating marks of the papacy, had, as yet, no settled establishment at Rome. Had this man lived in our age, he would doubtless have beheld, with astonishment, on the one hand, the worldly spirit of many Christian pastors so called, and on the other the impiety of numerous infidels who are continually railing against the religious. His mind, naturally vigorous, industrious and active, would doubtless have shaken off the gloom and credulity of superstition; but he would have been amazed to hear the

pompous pretences to philosophy, in which every juvenile sciolist indulges himself. He would have examined the fruits, and have been at a loss to conceive with what propriety the term philosopher could be applied to sceptics, blasphemers, atheists, levellers, and sensualists. He would, as a bishop, have tried what could be done to stem the torrent, and have exerted in the way of discipline, which was his peculiar talent, his usual address, mildness and resolution. He would have mourned over his beloved England *, if he had seen her so absurdly enslaved to ideas of mistaken liberty, as to spurn at decent rules of discipline, and to discountenance, as tyranny, godly attempts to introduce and support them. He would have been ready to say, "this people are enemies to their own good;" he would have pitied them, wept, and consoled himself with his usual refuge, the views of a better world, and have done what good was still in his power, by the example of a holy life, by painful preaching, and by pious writings. CENT. VI.

Of these last we have many still extant. He particularly excelled in devotional composition. Litanies had been used in the west before his time, in calamitous seasons, as during plague or famine. These were collected, and the choicest parts selected from them, and compiled, through the care of Gregory, into one large litany, not much different from that used by the Church of England at this day. It was much corrupted afterwards in the popish times, was reformed by Hermanus, archbishop of Cologne, in the days of Luther, and afterwards improved by our reformers. The Litany compiled by Gregory.

* The gratitude of Bede has (B. II. C. 1. Ecc. Hist.) led him to apply to Gregory the words of St. Paul in regard to the Corinthians. As an Englishman, who felt his obligations to Gregory, he says, "the seal of his apostleship are we in the Lord." The testimony of antiquity to Gregory's beneficent piety toward this island is uniform.

CHAP. VIII.

But the Church of England is not only indebted to Gregory for the Litany. In his Sacramentary he embodied the collects of the antient Church, and improved old, or made new ones. Galasius, before him, had appointed public prayers, composed by himself or others. These were all placed in the offices by Gregory. And by a comparison of our Book of Common Prayer with his Sacramentary, it is evident, that almost all the collects for Sundays, and the principal festivals in the Church of England, were taken out of the latter. To me it appears to be an advantage, that our reformers followed antiquity so much in the work. The purification of the antient services from the corrupt and idolatrous mixtures of popery, was as strong an indication of their judgment as the composition of prayers altogether new could have been, which, however, they scrupled not to introduce in various parts of the Liturgy. From the brief account I have given *, it appears, that the service of our Church is far more antient than the Roman Missal, properly speaking. And whoever has attended to the superlative simplicity, fervour, and energy of the prayers, and of the collects particularly, will have no hesitation in concluding, that they must have been composed in a time of true evangelical light and godliness. It is impossible indeed to say, how early some parts of the Liturgy were written; but doubtless they are of very high antiquity. Many persons, in dark times, and under the disadvantage of slothful ignorant pastors, have been enlightened and nourished through their medium, and not a few, I trust, of my readers can justly confess with me, how much their devotion has been assisted by the public use of them. Let any unprejudiced person compare with the Liturgy several forms of prayer compared in modern times, and he will find an unction to attend the former, of which the latter

* Nicholls on B. of Com. Pray.

is destitute. The present age is certainly much tinctured, in general, with a sceptical, philosophic spirit, which in its nature is not favourable to the production of devotional compositions. CENT. VI.

The historical evidence hence resulting of the religious spirit of the times is great. The Western Church was far from being wholly corrupt in the close of the sixth century *. The doctrines of grace revived by Augustine were still predominant: divine life was much clogged indeed with the asthma of superstition; but its pulse was yet vigorous. I close this digression, if it may be called one, with remarking, that the continued use of these liturgies in the churches of the West, demonstrates the concurrent testimony of antiquity in favour of evangelical doctrine.

Of Gregory's epistles nothing more is needful to be added to the numerous extracts from them, which have supplied me with materials for his history.

His exposition of the book of Job is very voluminous. In a letter to Leander prefixed to it, he speaks of the tripartite sense, according to the ideas of Augustine, with sufficient justness and accuracy; yet through fondness for system he carries his point too far, so as to destroy sometimes the literal sense, after the vicious mode of Origen. We may believe him, when he describes the correspondence of the subject to his own bodily afflictions; and he frankly owns his neglect of language and style. Few readers will be tempted to search the work throughout, on account of the heaviness of his manner, and the total want of elegance. Yet piety and humility are every where predominant; and though it can by no means be called a just commentary on the book of Job, he in general avoids deviations from the ana- Gregory's exposition of the book of Job.

* That beautiful and sublime ode, called Te Deum, ascribed, though not with certainty, to Ambrose, was incontestably used in the Church, before the middle of the sixth century.

CHAP. VIII.

logy of faith, by the evangelical purity of his frame and temper, and he had, I doubt not, real communion with God in the work. Let us hear his humble confession at the close; it deserves the serious notice of authors, and in that most salutary science of self-knowledge demonstrates a proficiency worthy of a follower of Augustine.

"Having finished my work, I see I must return to myself. The human mind is frequently bewildered, even when it attempts to speak correctly. For while we study propriety of language, we are drawn out of ourselves, and are apt to lose simplicity. From speaking in public let me return to the court of the heart; let me call my thoughts to a serious consultation with a view to discern myself, that I may observe whether I have spoken evil inadvertently, or good in a wrong spirit. For then only is real good spoken in a right spirit, when we mean by it to please him alone, from whom we receive it. I am not conscious of having said evil; yet I will not maintain that I am absolutely innocent in this respect. The good which I have spoken I have received from above, and it is less good, through my sinfulness. For, averting my contemplation from words and sentences, the leaves and branches, and narrowly inspecting the root of my intention, I know that I meant earnestly to please God: but the desire of human praise insensibly mixes with this intention. I discover this slowly and afterwards, and find that the execution corresponds not with the first intention. While we really mean to please God at first, the love of human praise steals into the mind, and overtakes and accompanies the pure design; as in eating, what was begun through necessity and in innocence, terminates too often in excess. If we are strictly examined by the divine Judge, how can we escape? our evils are our own without mixture, and our good things are defiled with impurity. What I feel within, I lay open to my reader. In expounding I have

not concealed what I think; in confessing I hide not what I suffer.—I beg every reader to pray for me. If the value of his prayers and of my exposition be compared, he will have the advantage. He receives from me only words; but repays me with tears of supplication." CENT. VI.

His pastoral care is a monument of the author's intense seriousness. I have already observed in many Christian pastors, and in Gregory as eminently as in most, a very strong sense of the importance of the clerical office, which rebukes the presumption of moderns more keenly than any words of mine can do. With the antients scarcely any person, however qualified, seemed adequate to the cure of souls; with us every stripling undertakes it without fear or hesitation. The treatise itself deserves to be read throughout by every candidate for the pastoral office. I know not how to select any parts of it particularly, and its brevity forbids and discourages all attempts at abridgment *. Gregory's pastoral care.

The exposition on the Canticles is worthy of the godly spirit of Gregory. I shall hazard a quotation or two, which I doubt not will correspond with the sensations of minds acquainted spiritually with Jesus Christ, however the profane may ridicule, and the phlegmatic may censure. It is worth while to show, that a spirit of union with Christ has ever been felt in his Church. Gregory's exposition of the Canticles.

On the first verse of the Canticles he says, "Let him whom I love above all, nay alone, let him come to me, that he may touch me with the sweetness of his inspiration. For when I feel his influence, I

* Should the young candidate for the ministry object, as he justly may, the difficulty of meeting with this work of Gregory, let him substitute in its place bishop Burnet's treatise on the same subject. It is to be lamented that so valuable a book is so little read and known, and that while the public taste has called for repeated editions of inflammatory politics, this treasure of pastoral information is dwindled into an oblivion little short of contempt.

CHAP. VIII.

leave myself by a sudden change, and being melted am transformed into his likeness. The holy mind is disgusted with all things which it feels from the body, and desires to become altogether spiritual; and while sensual objects murmur around, it flies into spiritual things, and desires to hide itself in them. Therefore it desires the loving kindness of the Lord, because without that it feels no power to approach him."

On the words, "draw me, we will run after thee," he observes, "Divine grace prevents us. He, who is drawn, runs, because being strengthened by divine love, he passes over all obstacles."

The defective taste and learning of his age forbid us to expect any very accurate and solid exposition of so difficult a prophet as Ezekiel. In fact, it is in occasional passages, independent of system, that Gregory shines. I single out a passage as an instance of this *: "Generally those who most excel in divine contemplation, are most oppressed with temptation. By the first the soul is lifted up to God, by the second it is pressed down into itself. Were it not for this the mind would fall into pride. There is, by the divine disposition, a wonderful temperature in this subject, that the saint may neither rise too high, nor sink too low."

Observe how divinely, in one of his homilies on the Gospels †, he speaks concerning the teaching of the Holy Spirit. On the words in St. John's Gospel, he (the Spirit) shall teach you all things, he says, "Unless the Spirit be with the heart of the hearer, the word of the teacher is barren. Let no man attribute to the teacher what he understands from his mouth; for, unless there be an internal teacher, the tongue of the external one labours in vain. Why is there such a difference in the sensations of hearers, all hearing the same words? It is to be ascribed to this special teaching. John himself

* Tom. II. Homil. on Ezek. xiv. † Tom. II. p. 451.

in his epistle teaches the same, 'the anointing teaches you of all things.'" It is plain that the Spirit of the Lord was not departed, as yet, from the Roman church, while his internal instructions, despised so fearlessly by the profane, and scrutinized so malignantly by many orthodox professors in our days, were regarded with so much simplicity and reverence. CENT. VI.

His dialogues, if indeed they be his, or be not much interpolated, dishonour his memory by the excess of superstition.

Thus far of the first of the Gregories; it will not be saying enough in his praise, though it is a truth, that it would have been to the advantage of the reputation of the Roman Church, if he had been the last of that name.

CHAP. IX.

WRITERS OF THIS CENTURY.

FULGENTIUS adorned the beginning, and Gregory the close of this century, which produced no other authors of equal merit. And the decay in learning and knowledge was so great, that I shall detain the reader a very little time on this article. CHAP. IX.

Ennodius, bishop of Pavia, wrote against those, who affirmed, that man could only choose evil. With gross ignorance of the connection and scope of St. Paul's argument, he quotes his words in the Epistle to the Romans, ch. vii. as favourable to his views, "For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not:" thus ascribing to man as such, what the apostle evidently speaks of as descriptive of the regenerate. He maintains that man by nature has power to turn himself to God, and deduces from the contrary doctrine the consequences which the advocates for the doctrine of free-will in all ages have done from the days of Cicero,

CHAP. IX.

who, it is remarkable, reasons exactly in the same manner.

On the other hand, John Maxentius, a Scythian monk, in company with a number of monks, his brethren, strenuously defended the doctrines of grace. In a confession of their faith is this sentence: "that free-will, since the entrance of sin, has of itself no other power but that of choosing some carnal good and pleasure *, and that it can neither desire nor will, nor do any thing for eternal life, but by the operation of the Holy Spirit."

So remarkable a confession would seem to show some distinct knowledge of the depravity of the heart. Maxentius and his brethren were ill treated by Hormisdas, bishop of Rome, a bold and dexterous politician, of whose theological knowledge and practical piety I find no proofs. He accused them of turbulence and self-conceit, and after a year's attendance at Rome they were expelled thence by his order. I cannot find that Hormisdas gave any decided opinion on the subject himself; probably he had never studied it; but he acted imperiously and decisively. Maxentius wrote with vigour in defence of the doctrines of grace, and I wish I could gratify the reader with a larger account of a man, who was counted worthy to suffer shame for the faith of Christ. The controversy between the defenders of grace and of human powers was still alive, and the Western Church continued still divided upon it.

Facundus, bishop of Hermiana in Africa, deserves to be mentioned for the sake of one sentence: "The faithful, in receiving the Sacrament of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, receive his body and his blood; not that the bread is properly his body, and the cup his blood; but because they contain in them the mystery of the body and blood of Jesus Christ†." Though it makes no part of our system

* Du Pin. Cent. 6th. † Du Pin. Facundus.

to confute the particular points of popery, I could not omit so clear a testimony against transubstantiation.

The Western Church is indebted for historical information to Gregory of Tours; the Eastern, to Evagrius. It must be confessed that they are inelegant and injudicious writers. They had the literary taste of this century.

The truly evangelical second council of Orange has been already reviewed. The second council of Mascon held in 585, is worthy of notice. They were very zealous for the observation of Sunday. Let none follow any business on this day, say they: let none yoke oxen, or prosecute suits of law; but let all the world apply themselves to sing the praises of God. They decree penalties against sabbath-breakers. An advocate, who was guilty of the crime, was to be driven from the bar; a peasant or a slave to receive some stripes. They exhort Christians also to spend the evening of Sunday in prayers. They forbid bishops to keep birds and dogs for game. They ordain the celebration of a Synod every three years in a place appointed by the bishop of Lyons and king Gontranus. A proof may hence be drawn that some spirit of genuine religion was still preserved in France.

The second council of Mascon, A. D. 585.

CENTURY VII.

CHAP. I.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

CHAP. I.

THE diversity of circumstances in different ages of the Church constantly admonishes a historian, who loves method and perspicuity, to vary the arrangement of his materials. No abstract rules, but the circumstances of each period, should direct him in this matter. In the century before us, barren and unpromising as it is for the most part, Great Britain shone with distinguished lustre.—As she was a world within herself, her ecclesiastical affairs were little connected with those of the Continent. Hence the propriety of reviewing them by themselves.—In this subject I shall closely follow the venerable Bede, whose narration extends to the year 731.—Though much of his history is fabulous and superstitious, it is still of the greatest value, because it is the only light which we have concerning the progress of the Gospel in our own country for several generations; and some rays of truth, piety, and good sense now and then break out in the historian amidst the clouds of legendary romance.

After the death of Augustine, Laurentius, the first archbishop of Canterbury, whom he had ordained, succeeded to that See. He trode * in the steps of his predecessor, and laboured to promote the best interests of the English by frequent preaching of the word, and by a diligent and useful example.

* Bede. B. II. C. 4.

I doubt not the sincerity of this prelate; though seduced by the charms of a nominal unity, he laboured, as the first missionary Augustine had done, to bring the British Churches to a conformity with the Church of Rome. He was actuated by the same subtile spirit of selfish ambition, of which even the best men in all ages have not been void; it operates imperceptibly, through the native energy of indwelling sin. The papist, the national churchman, and the sectary, are each liable to its influence, though in truly regenerate spirits there exists, likewise a divine principle, by the operation of which the sordid views of secular gain are entirely excluded. In this manner I would appreciate the characters of the Romish missionaries in England. Their disinterested labours, just views of Christian doctrine, and holy and unblemished lives, ought to have exempted them from the intemperate censures of writers, who seem to think an indiscriminate aversion to the Church of Rome to be one of the principal excellencies of a protestant historian *. CENT. VII.

Laurentius, in conjunction with Mellitus, bishop of London, and Justus, bishop of Rochester, endeavoured to reduce the "Scots, who inhabited Ireland †" to a conformity with the English Church. The three prelates wrote to them with this view, and declared themselves to be sent by the Roman See to propagate the Gospel among the pagan nations. Laurentius complained of the bigotry of a certain Irish bishop, who, coming to Canterbury, refused to eat at the same table, or even in the same

* I advert, particularly, to Bower's Lives of the Popes, and to Warner's Ecclesiastical History of our own country. Their laborious collection of facts deserves commendation. I avail myself of all the helps which offer, for the supply of materials. —But, I mean to extol the Church of Christ, wherever I can find her; nor should a Roman dress, when she appears in it, convey any prejudice to my mind.

† Bede's own words, which demonstrate that the Irish were anciently called Scots.

CHAP. I.

house with him. The archbishop could not prevail either with the Britons or with the Irish to enter into his views. "Even the present times, says our author, declare how little success he had." At the period in which Bede concludes his history, the greatest part of the British churches remained still distinguished from the English. The bishops of Rome continued to superintend the latter; and while Ethelbert lived, the Gospel flourished. This prince died after a reign of 56 years, twenty-one years after he had embraced Christianity, and was buried by the side of his deceased queen Bertha. Among other benefits which the English derived from him, there was a code of laws formed after the example of the Romans *, which was still extant in Bede's time, and was particularly calculated to protect the persons and property of the Church.

His son and successor Eadbald not only despised Christianity, but also lived in incest with his father's wife. Whence all, who had embraced the Gospel through motives purely secular, were induced to relapse into idolatry. Sabereth, king of the East Saxons, who had followed the example of Ethelbert who was his uncle, being deceased, his three sons became joint heirs of his kingdom. Immediately they resumed the idolatry, which they had intermitted a little in their father's lifetime, and encouraged their subjects to do the same. These princes observing the bishop of London to distribute the bread of the Eucharist in the church, asked why he did not give it to them as he had done to their father, and as he did at that very time to the people. "If you will be washed, replied Mellitus, in the same laver of regeneration in which your father was, you may partake of the same sacred bread: but if ye despise the laver of life, ye cannot partake of the bread of life." We will not, said they, enter into that fountain; we do not know that we need it, yet

* Bede, Id. C. 5.

we choose to eat of that bread. In vain did the upright pastor seriously and diligently admonish them, that it was not possible for any person remaining uncleansed from sin to partake of the communion: in a rage they declared, "If you will not gratify us in so small a matter, you shall not remain in our province." They thereupon ordered him to be gone with his associates. CENT. VII.

Mellitus, thus expelled, came into Kent to consult with Laurentius and Justus. The three bishops agreed to leave the country, that they might serve God with freedom elsewhere, rather than remain among enemies without fruit. Mellitus and Justus waiting the issue, retired first into France. The three princes not long after were slain in battle, but their subjects remained still incorrigible.

Laurentius intending to follow the two bishops, employed himself in prayer in the church during the silent hours of the night, with much agony and many tears, entreating God to look upon the state of the English Church, which, after such promising beginnings, seemed now on the eve of a total dissolution. Next morning he paid a visit to the king, who struck at last with horror for his crimes, and relenting, when he appeared in imminent danger of losing his Christian instructors for ever, forbad his departure, reformed his own life and manners, was baptized, and from that time became a zealous supporter of the faith *.

* Bede, C. 6.

I was unwilling to introduce into the narrative the story of St. Peter's whipping of Laurentius that night in the church, and reproving of him for his cowardice; whence he was said to have been induced to wait upon Eadbald next morning, who was struck, it seems, with remorse at the sight of the stripes which the bishop had received. Stories of this sort were innumerable in those times. The steady perseverance of Eadbald, and the entire change both of his private and public conduct, demonstrate the reality of his conversion. He most probably retained an inward reverence

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Eadbald was determined to show the sincerity of his zeal. He recalled Mellitus and Justus from France, after a year's exile. Justus was reinstated in Rochester; but Mellitus could not recover his See. The Londoners preferred idolatry, and Eadbald had not the same power which his father had possessed in that city to oblige them to receive him. So far, however, as his influence extended, he exerted it for the cause of Christ, and from the time of his conversion, adorned the Gospel, and propagated it among his people.

Laurentius being deceased, Mellitus was appointed the third archbishop of Canterbury, while Justus still presided at Rochester. These two bishops governed the English Church with much care and labour*. Mellitus, after having given the most undoubted proofs of genuine piety, and presided over the diocese of Canterbury five years, died in the year 624, and was succeeded by Justus.

Death of Mellitus. A. D. 624.

England was still governed by the Saxon Heptarchy. Seven kingdoms, often at war with one another, and also with the old native Britons, exhibited in our island scenes of the most unpleasant nature. Nor is any portion of our history in a secular view less interesting. Nevertheless in this dull period it pleased God to show the power of his grace among our ancestors. Hitherto Kent almost alone had been illuminated; but the Gospel was now introduced into the North, where reigned Edwin, king of the Northumbrians. And a woman was once more honoured as the instrument of sal-

for the religion in which he had been instructed in his childhood, against which his grand objection seems to have been the love of a dissolute life. The Lord honoured the prayers of Laurentius with success, and recovered the English Church at the last extremity. The substance of the narrative remains entire, abstracted from the legend which disgraces it.

* Bede, C. 7.

vation to a king her husband, and to many of his subjects. Edwin had sent to Eadbald to desire his sister Ethelburg or Tate * in marriage. The Kentish prince, with that Christian sincerity, which had ever distinguished him since his conversion, answered, that it was not lawful to marry his sister to an infidel. Edwin replied, that he would certainly grant free liberty of conscience to the princess and to her attendants, adding that he himself would receive the same religion if it appeared more worthy of God. Upon this Eadbald consented, and sent his sister into Northumberland †, attended by Paulinus, who was consecrated bishop of the North of England by Justus in the year 625. The reason for sending him was, that by daily exhortations and administration of the communion he might guard the young princess and her attendants from the infection of idolatry. But Providence had a higher and more extensive aim, and infused into the heart of Paulinus ‡ a strong desire to propagate the Gospel in these regions. He laboured much both to preserve Ethelburg and her attendants in Christian simplicity, and to draw over some of the Pagans to the faith. But though he preached a long time, "still, says Bede, the god of this world blinded the minds of unbelievers." After some time Edwin was very near being murdered by an assassin whom the king of the West Saxons sent against him, and the same night his queen was delivered of a daughter. While the king was thanking his gods for the birth of a daughter. Paulinus began to give thanks to the Lord Christ. Edwin told him, that he himself would worship Christ, and renounce

CENT. VII.

Paulinus made bishop of the North of England.

A. D. 625.

* Bede, C. 39.

† This term meant in those times all that part of England which lies to the North of the Humber.

‡ He was one of the monks whom Gregory had sent into England, and possessed much of the pious and zealous spirit of that renowned prelate.

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all his gods, if he would give him victory over the king of the West Saxons, who had attempted to murder him, and, for the present, he gave the young infant to Paulinus to be baptized. She was the first Northumbrian who was admitted into the visible Church by the ordinance of baptism; and twelve of the king's family were baptized on that occasion. Edwin collecting his forces vanquished the West Saxons, and killed or reduced into subjection all who had conspired against him. Returning victorious, he determined no longer to serve idols. He was, however, in no hurry to be baptized, but resolved to examine seriously the grounds and reasons of Christianity. He attended Paulinus's instructions, held conferences with prudent and knowing persons, and was himself observed, frequently to commune with his own heart, in silence, and anxiously to inquire what was true religion. All who use his methods will not fail to know the truth.

Edwin was doubtless in good earnest, and at length held a consultation with his intimate friends and counsellors. "What is," says he, "this hitherto unheard of doctrine, this new worship?" Coifi, the chief of the priests, answered, "See you, O king, what this is, which is lately preached to us? I declare most frankly what I have found to be true, that the religion we have hitherto followed is of no value. If the gods could do any thing, they would more particularly distinguish me with their favours who have served them so diligently. If the new doctrine be really better, let us embrace it." Another of the nobles observed, that he had taken notice of a swallow, which had rapidly flown through the king's house, entering by one door and going out at the other. This happened, he said, when the king was sitting at supper in the hall: a fire burning in the midst, and the room being heated, a tempest of rain or snow raged without;

the poor swallow felt indeed a temporary warmth, and then escaped out of the room. "Such," says he, "is the life of man; but what goes before, or comes after, is buried in profound darkness. Our ignorance then, upon such principles as hitherto we have embraced, is confessed; but if this new doctrine really teach us any thing more certain, it will deserve to be followed." These and similar* reflections were made by the king's counsellors. Coifi expressed also a desire to hear Paulinus preach, which, by the king's order, was complied with. The chief priest, having heard the sermon, exclaimed, "I knew formerly, that what we worshipped was nothing; because the more studiously I sought for truth, the less I found it. Now I openly declare, that in this preaching appears the truth, which is able to afford us life, salvation, and eternal bliss. I advise that we instantly destroy the temples and altars, which we have served in vain." The king feeling the conviction with no less strength, openly confessed the faith of Christ, and asked Coifi, who should be the first man that should profane the idolatrous places. "I ought to do it," replied the priest, "I, who worshipped them in folly, will give an example to others in destroying them, by the wisdom given me from the true God." He immediately went to the temple and profaned it, rejoicing in the knowledge of the Most High, and ordered his companions to burn the building with its enclosures. The place was still shown in our author's time, not far from York to the east of the Derwent.

CENT. VII.

In the eleventh year of Edwin's reign, this prince with all his nobles and very many of the commonalty was baptized, 180 years after the arrival of the Saxons in Britain, and in the year of Christ 627. This was performed at York in a wooden oratory,

Edwin and his nobles, &c. baptized. A. D. 627.

* Bede, C. 13.

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in which Edwin had been first proposed as a catechumen for baptism. By the advice of Paulinus he afterwards began to build on the same spot a church of stone, which however he did not live to finish, but it was completed by Oswald, his successor. Paulinus, first bishop of York, continued for six years, till the death of Edwin, to preach the Gospel; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed *. Edwin's children were afterwards baptized; and so strong was the desire of his subjects for Christianity, that Paulinus coming with the king and queen to a royal villa, called Adregin, spent there thirty-six days in teaching and baptizing from morning till night. At another time he baptized, in the river Swale †, which flows near Catterick, a number of persons who resorted thither. Many of these conversions may be supposed to have been the result of mere complaisance to the court. But there is every reason to believe, that there was a real effusion of the Spirit at this time. And, in the present age, when men profess much to think for themselves, it will not be easy to find a person in high life attending with a more cool and reasonable a spirit to the nature and evidences of true religion, than Edwin and his nobles did at a time which we call extremely barbarous. They thought impartially, and they had the indispensable qualification of being serious in their researches.

Edwin induced also Carpwald, king of the East Angles, to embrace the Gospel. Redwald, the father of this prince, had been baptized in Kent, but had been seduced by his wife into idolatry. Carpwald was succeeded by his brother Sibert, a man of singular zeal and piety, whose labours for the spiritual benefit of his subjects were much assisted by Felix, a Burgundian Christian. This per-

* They are Bede's words; the scriptural reader knows whence he borrowed them. Id. C. 14.

† Sualva, qui vicum juxta Cataractam prætorfluit.

son had received a commission from Honorius, the successor of Justus at Canterbury, to preach among the East Angles, which he did with great success, and lived and died bishop of Dummock *. CENT. VII.

The zealous Paulinus preached also in Lincolnshire, the first province south of the Humber †, where the governor of Lincoln ‡ with his house was converted to God. Bede informs us that a friend of his heard an old person make this declaration, "I was baptized, together with a multitude of others, in the river Chanta § by Paulinus, in the presence of Edwin." Wonderful things are told us of the perfect peace, order, and justice which prevailed during the reign of the wise and pious king of Northumberland.

Attempts were made all this time by the bishops of Rome, to induce the Irish to unite themselves to the English Church, but in vain. John the bishop of Rome, wrote letters also into Ireland against the Pelagian heresy which was reviving there.

Edwin, after having six years served the cause of Christ, was slain in a battle, which he fought with Carduella, a British prince, a Christian by profession, and with Penda, king of the Saxon principality of Mercia, a professed pagan. It is remarkable that the British prince used his victory with savage barbarity, and our author complains that, to his times, the British Christians looked on the English only as Pagans. Paulinus, after this mournful event, retired with Edwin's queen into Kent, whence he had brought her. There being a vacancy at Rochester, he was by Eadbald, who still reigned in Kent, fixed in that See, which he held to his death. His deacon James, whom he had left in Northumberland, preserved still some remains of Christianity in a Province now overrun by Pagans.

* Now Dunwich in Suffolk.
‡ Lindecolina.
† Bede, C. 16.
§ Now Trent.

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Such are the vicissitudes of the Church in this world: her perfect rest is above.

The situation of the North was, after this deplorable. Cedwalla, a British king, tyrannized with the fiercest barbarity over the subjects of Edwin, till at length Oswald his nephew, vanquished and slew him, and established himself in the kingdom. He had, in his younger days, lived an exile in Ireland, and had there been baptized. Desirous of evangelizing his people, he sent for a pastor out of Ireland, who, after he had made some fruitless attempts, returned into his own country, complaining of the intractable disposition of the Northumbrians. "It seems to me," said Aidan, a monk, who was present at his complaints, "that your austere manners and conduct towards them, were unsuitable to their state of extreme ignorance. They should be treated like infants with milk, till they become capable of stronger meat." The consequence was, what probably Aidan little expected; he was himself deputed by an Irish council to enter on the mission.

Character of Aidan the missionary.

The* character of this missionary would have done honour to the purest times. We may more confidently depend on the account given of him, because he belonged not to the Roman communion, to which Bede was superstitiously devoted, but was a schismatic in the observation of Easter, as all the Christians in the British isles were, except the Saxons. To him Bede applies the expression, that "he had a zeal for God, though not FULLY†

* Bede, B. III. C. 3, 4, 5.

† Non plene. Warner, by omitting the expression FULLY, misrepresents our venerable historian, as if he had looked on Aidan as wrong in point of knowledge altogether. In another place he invidiously compares the laboriousness and simplicity of the Irish missionary with the pomp of the Roman pastors sent by Gregory. We have seen abundant proof of the integrity and diligence of the latter. The truth is, that though God is no respecter of persons, man is very apt

according to knowledge." Oswald, whom early education had rather prejudiced in favour of the same schism, gave him an episcopal See in the isle of Lindisfarn*. But there was a great difficulty which attended his ministry; Aidan spake English very imperfectly. Oswald himself, therefore, who thoroughly understood Irish, acted as his interpreter. The zeal of this monarch was indeed extraordinary, to induce him to take such pains. Encouraged by his protection, more Irish ministers came into the North of England, and churches were erected; the Gospel was preached, and Northumberland, by the zeal and piety of the new missionaries, recovered the ground which it had lost by the expulsion of Paulinus. Even to the year 716† the principles of evangelical piety flourished in the Irish school; at which time this people were reduced to the Roman communion. CENT. VII.

Aidan himself was a shining example of godliness. He laboured to convert infidels and to strengthen the faithful. He gave to the poor whatever presents he received from the great, and employed himself with his associates in the Scriptures continually. He strictly avoided every thing luxurious, and every appearance of secular avarice or ambition: he redeemed captives with the money which was given him by the rich: he instructed them afterwards; and fitted them for the ministry.

to be so. Wherever he sends pastors fitted and commissioned by himself, genuine traces of their work appear, and leave salutary fruits behind them. The Irish Saint Columban, and after him Aidan, as well as the Roman missionaries of the Gregorian school, influenced by the same Holy Spirit, left wholesome vestiges of their labours in the British Isles, which extended even to distant ages. Had the former been Protestants, properly speaking, and the latter Papists, the same estimate ought to have been formed, though such a distinction in regard to those ages is chimerical.

* Now called Holy Island, four miles from Berwick.

† Bede, C. 4.

CHAP. I.

The king was not inferior to the prelate in his endeavours to promote godliness. Uncorrupt and humble in the midst of prosperity, he showed himself the benefactor of the poor and needy, and cheerfully encouraged every attempt to spread the knowledge and practice of godliness among men.

In the mean time Byrinus was sent from Rome into Britain, who, arriving among the West Saxons, and finding them all pagans, laboured to instruct them. Cynigilsus, their king, the father-in-law of Oswald, received baptism from him. The two princes gave to Byrinus the city of Dorcinca *; where he resided as bishop, and the Gospel was propagated with success through this branch of the heptarchy.

The king of Kent died. A. D. 640.

In Kent Eadbald died in the year 640 †, and was succeeded by his son Easconbert, who reigned twenty-four years, was zealous in the support of godliness, and was the first Saxon king who totally destroyed all the idols in his dominions.

His son Easconbert destroyed all the idols in his dominions.

Oswald at length, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, was slain in battle by the same Penda, king of Mercia, who was mentioned before. A memorable instance of the unsearchable ways of Providence! Two kings, whose equals in piety and virtue are not easily found in any age, both lose their lives in battle with the same enemy, a barbarian and a pagan! But they served God not for worldly, but heavenly blessings.

Providence was however preparing the way for the propagation of the Gospel through the whole heptarchy. Young Penda, son of the tyrant of Mercia, desiring in marriage the daughter of Oswy, brother and successor to Oswald. His reception of Christianity was made the condition; and the young prince, we are told, on hearing the doctrines of the Gospel preached, was induced to declare,

* Now Dorchester, near Oxford. † Bede, C. 8.

that he would become a Christian, even if Oswy's daughter were denied him. Two years before the death of old Penda, the son married the Northumbrian princess, and patronized Christianity in that part of his father's dominions which was committed to his government. But the latter renewed hostilities against Oswy, and at length was slain in battle*. Oswy, now master of Mercia and Northumberland, applied himself to propagate Christianity among his new subjects. Through his influence also the Gospel was restored to the kingdom of the East Saxons; and London, which had rejected the ministry of Mellitus, again embraced the religion of Christ. CENT. VII.

In this century, Kentigern, bishop of Glasgow in Scotland, being expelled from his See, founded a monastery, and a bishopric on the banks of the river Elwy in North Wales. Archbishop Usher, quoting John of Tinmouth, says, there were in the abbey 965 monks, one of whom was named Asaph. Kentigern, being called back to Glasgow, appointed Asaph abbot and bishop of Llan-Elwy. Of Asaph it is recorded that he was a zealous preacher, and that he used to say, "they envy the salvation of souls who withstand the preaching of the Word." The See has since borne his name; and he seems to have had a spirit superior to the monastic superstition, in which he was educated †. Marianus Scotus, in his Chronicle, says, in regard to this century, "Ireland was filled with Saints. Their schools were renowned for ages ‡."

But it is time to bring the English Church history of this century to a close. That there was a real effusion of the Holy Spirit on England, so that numbers were turned from idols to the living God;

* The battle was fought between Oswy and Penda, near Loyden, now Leeds, in Yorkshire, at Winwidfield, on the river Winvaed, now Aire.

† Alban Butler, Vol. V. ‡ Idem.

CHAP. I.

the pastors, first of the Roman, and afterwards of the British communion, laboured in the work with simplicity and success, has been evidenced. We have had also several instances of the completion of that prophecy, "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and Queens thy nursing mothers*." But the zeal and purity of the Christian spirit seldom last much longer than thirty or forty years in any place. The native depravity of man gradually quenches the Spirit of God, and the power of godliness is soon buried, or at least very faintly subsists in the midst of factious contentions and worldly lusts. This I find to have been the case in the latter part of the century in England. Wilfrid, bishop of York, a very suspicious character, in his exile laboured indeed among the Frisians, and is said to have been the first missionary who taught that people. If he did any real good among them, it was the most useful part of his life; for in Britain he seems to have fomented turbulence and contention. However, he paved the way for more upright missionaries, whose labours in Friezeland shall be mentioned hereafter. The craft of Satan too commonly succeeds in fomenting divisions, even among those who with equal sincerity are engaged in the best of causes. While such men as Paulinus and Aidan lived, the diversity of sentiments produced no great mischief. Afterwards, as depravity increased, and the spirit of faith and love grew colder, very hurtful disputes arose, to the scandal of the Gospel. The Roman Church, however, acquired more and more influence, though it was very far from pervading the whole of the British isles at the end of the century. But nothing particularly pertinent to the design of this history occurs. Let it suffice us to say, that our ancestors saw in this century a blessed time, the fruits of which will abide for ever.

* Isaiah xlix. 23.

CHAP. II.

THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN GERMANY AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

CENT. VII.

The northern parts of Europe had still remained in the darkness of idolatry. In this century they were visited by the Most High. The Britons, Scots, and Irish, were honoured as the principal instruments in the work; and this circumstance affords an additional evidence to the account already given of the genuine spirit of godliness which prevailed in the British isles. The French had also their share in the blessed cause. I shall throw together the very imperfect hints which are preserved to us of these important transactions. Though the first instance more properly relates to France than to Germany, it may with no great impropriety be mentioned in this chapter. Omer, bishop of Tarvanne, the old metropolis of the Morini in Artois, laboured with success in the cultivation of a wilderness. Vice and idolatry were very predominant in his diocese; but by the assistance of Bertin, a Swiss, his kinsman, he was enabled to eradicate inveterate evils, and to civilize a race of barbarians.

The erection of many convents in Germany for the Scotch and Irish, some of which are still extant, is to be accounted for from the ecclesiastical connections of their ancestors. Many persons travelled from Great Britain and Ireland with the laudable purpose of preaching Christ in Batavia, Belgium, and Germany*. And however superstition might tarnish their labours, there must have been a nobler principle to induce men to undergo so much danger, with hardly any possible prospect of lucre or of fame.

* Mosheim, Cent. 7th. C. 1.

CHAP. II.

Mere philosophers are generally but too liberal in censure and raillery: we seldom, however, hear of them engaging in any work of so disinterested a nature. Only the love of God in Christ can support the spirit of men in such enterprizes.

Columban, an Irish monk, distinguished from him of the same name, spoken of before, who was called "the ancient," toward the close of the foregoing century had extirpated the remains of expiring paganism in France. He also passed the Rhine, and evangelized the Suevi*, the Boii†, and other German nations. He laboured in the cause to his death, which happened in the year 615.

A. D. 615.

Gal, one of his companions, laboured with much zeal about the lakes of Zurich and Constance. Near the latter lake, at a little distance from Bregent, he erected a monastery, which still bears his name. In fortitude and laboriousness he was inferior to none of the missionaries of this age. But we find very little worthy of being recorded concerning him.

The account of Kilian, another Irish missionary, is somewhat more satisfactory. He received a commission from the bishop of Rome, toward the end of the century, to preach to the infidels; and with some of his disciples he came to Wirtzbourg upon the Mayne, where a pagan duke called Gosbert was governor. The duke received the Gospel, was baptized, and many followed his example. But he had married his brother's wife. The missionary united discretion with zeal, and deferred his admonitions on this head, till he found that his pupil the duke was firmly settled in the faith‡. Kilian at length ventured to act the part of John the Baptist, and the event was in a great measure similar. Gosbert promised to obey, but delayed the execution of his

* This people inhabited the places between the Rhine and the Elbe.

† Now Bavarians.

‡ Fleury, B. XL. 37.

promise till he should return from an expedition. The mischief of procrastination against the light of conscience was never more strongly illustrated. In his absence Geilana, for that was the name of the German Herodias, procured the murder of Kilian and his companions. They were engaged in devotional exercises, and died with the patience of martyrs in the year 688. Gosbert was prevailed on by the artifices of Geilana to suffer the murderers to escape with impunity. But all the actors in this tragedy, Gosbert among the rest, came to an unhappy end; and there is no doubt but that in this case, as well as many others, the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church. Numbers of the eastern Franks had embraced Christianity, and sealed the ministry of Kilian. Barbatus, born in the territory of Benevento, in Italy, in the beginning of this century, was also a great ornament to it. Meditation on the Scriptures was his chief delight. He was acknowledged to excel in preaching. He acted as curate of Morcona near Benevento, and gave great offence by his faithfulness. By the malice of the people he was obliged to retire to Benevento. This town was possessed by the Lombards, who were chiefly Arians; many of them were indeed idolaters, though some were of the general Church, with their duke Arichis, a friend of Gregory I. Barbatus labouring there found the Christians, so called, very idolatrous. They worshipped a golden viper, and a tree on which the skin of a wild beast was hung. He preached and prayed a long time: at length the emperor Constans beseiging Benevento, the wicked inhabitants were intimidated so far, as to repent of their idolatry. Barbatus was allowed to cut down the tree, and to melt the golden viper, of which he made a sacramental chalice. This man was appointed bishop of Benevento in 663, and destroyed every vestige of idolatry in the whole state. He

CENT. VII.

Murder of Kilian and his companions, A. D. 688.

Barbatus made bishop of Benevento. A. D. 663.

CHAP. II.

lived afterwards to bear a testimony by his presence in the council of Constantinople, against the Monothelite heresy, and died in 682. See Butler's Lives.

Died A. D. 682.

Toward the conclusion of the century, Willibrod, an English missionary, and eleven of his countrymen, crossed over the sea into Holland, to labour among the Friezelanders. But being ill-treated by the king of Friezeland, who put one of their company to death*, they retired into Denmark. Returning, however, into Friezeland in the year 693, they propagated divine truth with success. Willibrod was ordained bishop of Wilteburg† by the Roman prelate, and laboured in his diocese to his death; while his associates spread the Gospel through Westphalia and the neighbouring countries‡.

English missionaries ill-treated in Holland retired into Denmark.

A. D. 693.

It was in this century, the former part of it, according to the researches of one author§, the latter part, according to those of another‖, that Bavaria received the Gospel from the ministry of Rupert, or Robert, bishop of Worms. He was invited by Theodo, duke of Bavaria. His ministry prospered, and he was appointed bishop of Saltzburg. The increasing harvest required more missionaries: he therefore returned to his own country, and brought twelve assistants: from that time Christianity was established in Bavaria. Corbinian, another Frenchman, watered where Rupert had planted. Duke Theodo received him gladly. His son and successor Grimoald was induced to part with his wife,

* Mosheim, Cent. VII. C. 1.

† Now Utrecht.

‡ Disen, an Irish monk, taught the Gospel in Ireland, France, and Germany. His labours were most remarkably crowned with success in the neighbourhood of Mentz.—A. Butler.

§ Velserius Rerum Boicarum, B. IV.

‖ Fleury, B. XLI. 31. If Fleury's chronology be right, the greatest part of the narrative before us belongs to the next century.

whom he had married contrary to the Levitical laws of matrimonial consanguinity; and so far as can be judged from very imperfect accounts, the Gospel was received with great sincerity in this country*. CENT. VII.

Some † time after, Emmeram an Aquitanian Frenchman, leaving his country and his large possessions, travelled to Ratisbon, to spread the Gospel. He was well received by another Theodo, duke of Bavaria. He observed, that the Bavarians were, many of them at least, still addicted to idolatrous rites, which they mixed with Christianity. The old inhabitants were particularly guilty of these things. He laboured among them three years, preaching in all the towns and villages, and reserved for himself only the bare necessaries of life. His success was great, and his end was worthy of his profession. Lambert, a son of the duke, murdered him at length with savage barbarity. He had been offered a large revenue and a settlement at Ratisbon by Theodo, which he had refused, declaring that he only wished to preach Christ crucified.

Marinus and Anian, two Egyptians, came into Bavaria, and were very successful in the same cause. But the excessive austerity which they brought with them from the east must have been detrimental to their work. The former at length was murdered by robbers; the latter died a natural death. Elio,

* This missionary was remarkable for private devotion, as well as public labours. He reserved to himself a considerable portion of time every day for prayer and meditation. But from Alban Butler's account I learn, that Grimoald persecuted Corbinian on account of his faithfulness; and that Biltrude the relict of Grimoald's brother, hired assassins to murder him. Both Grimoald and Biltrude perished miserably. If the former was induced to repentance at all, he seems to have relapsed. After the deaths of his persecutors, Corbinian returned to Frisengen, and laboured till his death, which happened in the year 730.

† Velser. Id.

CHAP. II.

bishop of Noyon, carefully visited his large diocese, especially the pagan parts of it, and was very successful among the Flemings, the Antwerpers, and the Frisons. At first he found them fierce and exceedingly obstinate. But God was with him both in life and doctrine. Every Easter he baptized great numbers, who had been brought to the knowledge of God in the preceding year. Very aged persons, amidst crowds of children, came to be baptized, and there is the fairest evidence of his evangelical success. This is all that I can find, with certainty, of the propagation of the Gospel in the seventh century in Germany and the neighbouring countries. The censures of Mosheim, as if the greatest part of the missionaries were not sincere, or as if many of the monks covered their ambition with the cloak of mortification, appear to me illiberal and unfounded*, and would have been more worthy of a modern sceptic. Superstition and an excessive attachment to the Roman See is very visible among them. But the little account of facts, which we have, bears testimony to their uprightness. Where is that charity which hopeth all things, if we are to suppose men to be wrong, against all appearances? If ecclesiastical historians had delighted as much in recording good as they have in recording evil, it is probable a more ample refutation of the inconsiderate aspersions of this author might have been exhibited to the reader.

* Mosheim, Id. I find no just reason to suspect any of them except Wilfrid, bishop of York, mentioned in the last Chapter.

CHAP. III.

THE GENERAL HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.

CENT. VII.

PHOCAS, the Greek emperor, was deposed and put to death by Heraclius in the year 610. He was one of the most vicious and profligate tyrants, and may be compared with Caligula, Nero, and Domitian. Since the days of Constantine such characters had been exceeding rare. For such was the benign influence of the Gospel, that even amidst all the corruptions and abuses of it, which were now so numerous, a decency of character and conduct, unknown to their Pagan predecessors, was supported by the emperors in general. Heraclius, the successor of Phocas, reigned thirty years. In the beginning of his reign the Persians desolated the eastern part of the empire, and made themselves masters of Jerusalem. While Asia groaned under their cruelties and oppressions, and was afflicted with scourge after scourge, for her long abuse of the best gift of God, an opportunity was given for the exercise of Christian graces to a bishop of a Church, which had long ceased to produce Christian fruit.

Phocas put to death by Heraclius. A. D. 610.

This was John, bishop of Alexandria, called the Almoner, on account of his extensive liberality. He daily supplied with necessaries those who flocked into Egypt, after they had escaped the Persian arms. He sent to *Jerusalem the most ample relief for such as remained there: he ransomed captives; placed the sick and wounded in hospitals, and visited them, in person, two or three times a week. He even seems to have interpreted too strictly the sacred rule, "of giving to him that asketh of thee."

Christian conduct of John the Almoner, bishop of Alexandria.

* Fleury, B. XXXVII. 10.

CHAP. III.

His spirit however was noble; "Should the whole world come to Alexandria," said he, "they could not exhaust the treasures of God."

The Nile not having risen to its usual height, there was a barren season; provisions were scarce, and crowds of refugees still poured into Alexandria. John continued, however, his liberal donatives, till he had neither money, nor credit. The prayer of faith was his resource, and he still persevered in hope. He even refused a very tempting offer of a person, who would have bribed him with a large present, that he might be ordained deacon. "As to my brethren the poor," said the holy prelate, "God, who fed them, before you and I were born, will take care to feed them now, if we obey him." Soon afterward he heard of the arrival of two large ships, which he had sent into Sicily for corn. "I thank thee, O Lord," cried the bishop in a rapture of joy, "that thou hast kept me from selling thy gift for money."

From the beginning of his bishopric he supported 7500 poor persons by daily alms. He was accessible to them on all occasions; and what is most material, divine faith seems to have influenced his acts of love. "If God," said he, "allow us to enter into his house at all times, and if we wish him speedily to hear us, how ought we to conduct ourselves toward our brethren?" He constantly studied the Scriptures, and, in his conversation, was instructive and exemplary. Slander and evil speaking he peculiarly disliked. If any person in his presence was guilty in this respect, he would give another turn to the discourse. If the person still persisted, he would direct his servant not to admit him any more.

The long course of heresy, licentiousness, and ambition, which had filled the Alexandrian Church, supported by the shameful examples of such pastors as Theophilus and other profligate men, must have reduced it to the lowest ebb; and I wonder not to

find, that persons behaved indecently, even in public worship. John, one day seeing several leave the church after the reading of the Gospel, went out also and sat down among them. "Children," said he, "the shepherd should be with his flock; I could pray at home, but I cannot preach at home." By doing this twice, he reformed the abuse. Let it be marked, as an evidence of the zeal of this prelate, who, like another Josiah, seems to have been sent to reform a falling church, that the preaching of the word engaged much of his heart. The contempt of preaching is a certain token of extreme degeneracy. CENT. VII.

A canon was made at Paris, in a council, in the year 614, the same year in which Jerusalem was taken, which enjoins that HE shall be ordained to succeed a deceased bishop, who shall be chosen by the archbishop, together with the bishops of the province, the clergy and the people, without any prospect of gain: if the ordination be conducted otherwise through compulsion or neglect, the election shall be void. The intelligent reader will hence judge of the state of ecclesiastical polity at that time. Remarkable Canon made in a Council at Paris. A. D. 614. In the same year the Persians take Jerusalem.

In 616 John the Almoner departed from Alexandria, for fear of the Persians, and died soon after in Cyprus, in the same spirit in which he had lived; and with him ends all that is worth recording of the church of Alexandria. Death of John about A. D. 616.

In the same year the haughty Chosroes, king of Persia, having conquered Alexandria and Egypt, and taken Chalcedon, Heraclius, who saw the ruin of his empire approaching, begged for peace. "That "I will never consent to," replied the tyrant, till you "renounce him who was crucified, whom you call "God, and with me adore the sun." If one compare Chosroes and Heraclius, their personal characters will not appear intrinsically different. In one is seen a daring blasphemer of Christ, in the other a mere nominal professor of Christianity, whose life brought neither honour nor credit to the Gospel.

CHAP. III.

Their ostensible characters in the world were, however, extremely different. The Lord, who is a jealous God, has ever been used to confound his open enemies in the view of all mankind. Chosroes was a second Sennacherib, and he was treated as such by the Sovereign of the universe. The spirit of Heraclius was roused, and God gave him wonderful success: the Persian king was repeatedly vanquished, though he ceased not to persecute the Christians, so long as he had power; and after he had lost the greatest part of his dominions, he was murdered by his own son, as was the case with Sennacherib, and in the year 628 the Persian power ceased to be formidable to the Roman empire *.

It is not without reason that St. Paul exhorts us "to shun profane and vain babblings; because their word will eat like a canker †." The Nestorian and Eutychian heresies, opposite extremes, the one dividing the person, the other confounding the two natures of Jesus Christ, though condemned by councils, still flourished in great vigour in the east. And the resistance of the orthodox had little effect, for want of the ‡ energy of true spiritual life, which still subsisted in a measure in the west. For there the sound doctrine of grace, the guard of true humility, was an ensign around which truly pious men were wont to rally their strength from time to time. But, in Asia and Egypt, religion was for the most part heartless speculation. And about the year 630 the Eutychian heresy produced another, the Monothelite, which ascribed only one will to Jesus Christ. This opinion was the natural consequence of that, which gave him only one nature. Theodore, bishop of Pharan in Arabia, first started this notion, which was also readily received by Sergius, bishop of Constantinople, whose parents had

The Monothelite heresy.

A. D. 630.

* Fleury, B. XXXVII. 34.
† 2 Tim. ii. 16, 17.
‡ Fleury, B. XLVII. 41.

been Eutychians. Cyrus, who soon after was made bishop of Alexandria, supported the same heresy. The ambiguous subtilties of the party drew the emperor Heraclius into the same net, and the east was rapidly overspread with the heresy. CENT. VII.

In a council at Alexandria, Sophronius, a man of sincerity and simplicity, and formerly the disciple of John the Almoner, with tears bewailed and protested against the innovation, but in vain. Having been elected bishop of Jerusalem in 629, he afterwards in 633 exerted his authority against the growing heresy, but with meekness of wisdom. In a synodical letter he explained with equal solidity and accuracy the divine and human operations of Jesus Christ, and gave pertinent instances of both *. Sophronius opposes the heresy. A. D. 633.

" When he thought fit, he gave his human nature an opportunity to act or to suffer whatever belonged to it. His incarnation was no fancy, and he always acted voluntarily. Jesus Christ, as God, willingly took on himself human nature, and he willingly suffered in his flesh to save us, and, by his merits, to free us from suffering. His body was subject to our natural and innocent passions: he permitted it to suffer, according to its nature, till his resurrection; then he freed himself from all that is corruptible in our nature, that he might deliver us from the same." Sophronius recommends himself to the prayers of Sergius, to whom he writes, and adds, " pray for our emperors," he means Heraclius and his son, " that God may give them victory over all the barbarians; particularly, that he would humble the pride of the Saracens, who for our sins have suddenly risen upon us, and lay all waste with fierce barbarity and impious confidence."

Thus, in the lowest times of evangelical religion, God ever raised up men who understood the truth, and knew how to defend it by sound argument, a

* Fleury, B. XXXVIII. 5.

CHAP. III.

charitable spirit, and a holy life. This seems to have been the case of Sophronius. In the mean time the Monothelite heresy spread wider and wider. Even Honorius, bishop of Rome, was led into the snare, owned but one will in Jesus Christ, and imposed silence on all the controversialists. Heraclius himself, who lent his imperial authority to the support of a speculative phantom, while he imposed on his own heart by a specious show of theological nicety, lived in the gross and open wickedness of incest, by marrying his own neice.

Mahomet. A. D. 608.

The danger from the Saracens, mentioned by Sophronius, was no other than the victorious arms of Mahomet, the Arabian impostor. He had begun in the year 608. to declare himself a prophet, and, by the assistance of a Jew and a renegado Christian, had formed a farrago of doctrines and rites, in which there was a mixture of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity, whence he found means to draw over to his party some of the various sorts of men who inhabited Arabia. An age of excessive ignorance favoured his schemes: at this day so senseless and absurd a book as the Koran could scarcely move the mind of any person in Europe. But he laid hold of the corrupt passions of man, and by indulging his followers in sensuality, ambition, and the love of booty, and by promising them a carnal heaven hereafter, he contrived a religion more directly adapted to please mankind than any other of which we have heard. At the same time by declaring war against all who did not receive him, he gave an undoubted right to all nations to attack a system which could only thrive by the oppression of others. But there are seasons of infatuation, when, for the sins of men, empires and kingdoms are permitted to slumber, and no effectual measures of resistance are embraced, till invaders, at first weak and contemptible, grow in time to an enormous height. This was the case with Mahometanism. The time was come when the

Saracen locusts were about to torment the Christian world, and the prophecy of Rev. ix. (1—12) was going to be fulfilled. The Greeks were idly employed in the new dispute: vice and wickedness prevailed over the East in all forms. A few indeed mourned over the times, and adorned the truth by humility and holiness, but scarcely any Christian writers appeared to make a serious opposition to the doctrines of Mahomet, and at the time of his death, which happened in the year 631, he had conquered almost all Arabia *.

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Death of Mahomet. A. D. 631.

Notwithstanding the decease of the impostor, the Mahometan arms proceeded still with the same rapidity. Damascus fell into the hands of his successors; and Sophronius exhorted his flock to take warning and repent. Jerusalem however was taken by the enemy in the year 637, and Sophronius died soon after. Antioch and Alexandria successively sunk under them. Persia itself was subdued. Thus did God equally punish the persecuting idolaters, and the vicious professors of Christianity in the east. They were doomed to a long night of servitude

Jerusalem taken by the Saracens. A. D. 637.

* It has pleased God to permit the existence of this odious and contemptible religion to this day. And it should be carefully observed, that Mahomet, wicked and deceitful as he doubtless was altogether, did not openly oppose God or his Christ. He did not deny directly, though he did consequentially, the divine revelation either of the Old or New Testament. He always spake respectfully of the inspired prophetical character of Moses and of Christ. He received so much of Christianity as agrees with Socinianism. Jehovah was not therefore openly despised by him as he was by Julian, Chosroes, and Sennacherib. On them was fulfilled that Scripture, "he repayeth them that hate him, to destroy them; he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face." Deut. vii. 10. A speedy destruction of such avowed enemies seems to be menaced, that the divine character may be vindicated. His covert enemies, who yet treat him with respectful decorum, are often permitted long to exist, for the punishment of false professors. For the truth and majesty of God are not so sensibly dishonoured by them in the view of the whole world, as to call for their immediate extirpation.

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under Mahometanism, which continues to this time. Heraclius himself died in the year 641. God had showed him great mercies, and given him very great encouragement to seek true religion, by the remarkable success of his arms against the Persians in the middle of his reign. But he lived wickedly and speculated unscripturally. And a new power was erected, which reaped the fruits of all his Persian triumphs, and tore from him the fairest provinces of the east.

Death of Heraclius. A. D. 641.

To what purpose should I run through the mazes of the Monothelite controversy? yet something must be said of the part which Maximus acted in it. He was one of the most learned men of the age, and had been employed by Heraclius as his secretary; but I wonder not that a man, who loved real godliness, as he did, should have a strong aversion to a court like that of Heraclius. He entered into the monastery of Chrysopolis near Chalcedon, and was at length elected abbot. He it was, who succeeded Sophronius in the defence of the primitive faith, and with much labour confuted the heresiarchs. Martin, bishop of Rome, was excited by the zeal of Maximus to assemble a council, in the Lateran, of a hundred and five bishops in 649. Constans was at this time emperor, and, by a decree, had forbidden any side at all to be taken in the controversy. Sergius, Pyrrhus, and Paul, three successive bishops of Constantinople, had supported the heresy. The controversy had now lasted eighteen years. In this way the active minds of men, destitute of the truth, but eagerly embracing the form of godliness, gratified the self-righteous bias of the heart, and all the malevolent passions in long-protracted controversies, while practical religion was lost. Nor could all the calamities of the times, and the desolation of the eastern churches, move them to the love of peace and truth.

Council in the Lateran. A. D. 649.

In these circumstances, Martin in council ven-

tured to anathematize the supporters of the Monothelite heresy. I cannot blame his disobedience to the emperor Constans in refusing to observe silence on a point of doctrine which appeared to him important. Constans evidently forgot his office when he required such things. And it is a curious instance of the power of prejudice in some Protestant historians*, that they will so much support the conduct of a worthless tyrant as Constans doubtless was, because his speculative principles induced him to treat a Roman bishop with cruelty. There was a haughtiness, no doubt, and an asperity in the language and behaviour of Martin, very unbecoming a Christian. His cause however seems just; nor does it appear that he either meant or acted treasonably: he defended that part of the truth, which was opposed, with the magnanimity, though not with the meekness, that became a bishop. Constans ordered him to be dragged into the east, and treated him with a long-protracted barbarity of punishment. Martin was firm to the last. "As to this wretched body," says he, "the Lord will take care of it. He is at hand; why should I give myself any trouble? for I hope in his mercy, that he will not prolong my course." He died in the year 655. His extreme sufferings of imprisonment, hunger, fetters, brutal treatment a thousand ways, call for compassion: his constancy demands respect; and his firm adherence to the doctrines of truth, though mixed with a very blamable ambition in maintaining the dignity of the Roman See, deserves the admiration of Christians. He is, in Romish language, called St. Martin; and I hope he had a just title to the name in the best sense of the word.

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Martin, bishop of Rome, cruelly treated by Constans the IId; dies in prison. A. D. 655.

Maximus was also brought to Constantinople, and, by the order of Constans, underwent a number

* See Bower and Mosheim.

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of examinations. He was asked by an officer to sign the type;—so the edict of Constans was named. Only do this, said the officer, believe what you please in your heart. "It is not to the heart alone," replied Maximus, "that God hath confined our duty; we are also obliged with the mouth to confess Jesus Christ before men *." It is astonishing † to observe what pains were taken to engage him to own the Monothelite party, nor can this be accounted for in any other way than by the opinion which all men had of his piety and sincerity, and the expectation of the influence which his example would have on many. But the labour was lost: Maximus, though seventy-five years old, preserved all the vigour of understanding, and confounded his examiners, by the solidity of his answers. He clearly proved, "that to allow only one will or operation in Jesus Christ, was in reality to allow only one nature: that therefore the opinion for which the emperor was so zealous, was nothing more than Eutychianism dressed up anew: that he had not so properly condemned the emperor, as the doctrine, by whomsoever it was held: that it was contrary to the current of all ecclesiastical antiquity: that our Saviour was always allowed from the apostolical times to be perfect God and perfect man, and must therefore have the nature, will, and operations distinctly belonging both to God and man: that the new notion went to confound the idea both of the Divinity and the humanity, and to leave him no proper existence at all: that the emperor was not a pastor, and that it had never been practised by Christian emperors, in the best times, to impose silence on bishops: that it was their duty not to disguise the truth by ambiguous expressions, but to defend it by clear and distinct terms adapted to the subject: that Arianism had always endeavoured to

* See Butler's Vol. XII. † Fleury, B. XXXIV. 12, &c.

support itself by such artifices as those employed by the emperor, and that a peace obtained by such methods in the Church was at the expense of truth." I admire the good sense and sincerity, which appear through the very long account of his defence, of which I have given a very brief summary. Were it not, that God from age to age had raised up such champions in his Church, humanly speaking, not an atom of Christian truth by this time would have been left in the world. For heretics have uniformly acted on this plan; viz. under the pretence of the love of peace and union, they have imposed silence on the orthodox, whenever they had the power; and in the mean time propagated their own tenets. The question before us was very metaphysical and obscure; yet, if the emperor's side had prevailed, instead of an insignificant party, called the Maronites, in the east, who still subsist, the Monothelites might have filled half the globe to this day. CENT. VII.

The tyrant, enraged to find himself disappointed, ordered Maximus to be scourged, his tongue to be cut out, his right hand to be cut off; and then directed the maimed abbot to be banished, and doomed to imprisonment for the rest of his life. The same punishment was inflicted on two of his disciples, both of the name of Anastasius. These three upright men were separated from each other, and confined in three castles in obscure regions of the east. Their condemnation took place in 656: Maximus died in 662: one of the Anastasius's in 664: they both had sustained the most cruel indignities, and had been rendered incapable of any consolations, except those which undoubtedly belong to men who suffer for righteousness sake. The other Anastasius died in a castle at the foot of Mount Caucasus in 666.

Barbarous persecutions by Constans II A. D. 656.

While such barbarous measures were used by nominal Christians to support unscriptural tenets, it is not to be wondered at that Providence frowned

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on the affairs of the empire. The Saracens now ruled over Arabia, Persia, Mesopotamia, Chaldea, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and part of Africa. Even Europe suffered from the depredations of the Arabians, and part of Sicily was reduced to their subjection.

Constans Murders his brother, Theodosius. Is himself murdered, A. D. 668.

The unworthy emperor Constans murdered also his own brother Theodosius, and continued to disgrace the Christian name by his follies, his vices, and his cruelties. He was himself dispatched at length in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, in 668.

Council of Constantinople. A. D. 680.

In the year 680 a general council was called at Constantinople: the emperor Constantine Pogonatus presided: the Monothelite heresy was anathematized; and its several abettors were condemned, among whom was Honorius a bishop of Rome. A certain proof that infallibility was neither allowed nor pretended to at that time by the Italian prelate. For the legates of Agathon, who was then bishop of Rome, were at the council, nor do we find that any opposition was made by them or by their master to the condemnation of Honorius*.

If we compare the east and the west, during this century, we shall see a very striking difference. In England true godliness shone for a considerable part of it: in France there was a good measure of piety; and from these two countries divine truth made its way into Germany and the north with glorious success. In Italy, the Lombards were more and more cleared of Arianism; and though there arose no bishop of Rome to be compared at all to Gregory, yet, in point of theological speculation, the purity of the faith was preserved by them all, except one. And his condemnation, which we have just seen, demonstrates that Antichrist had not yet arrived at maturity. Infallibility was not then thought of, as attached to the person of the Roman prelate. His power indeed was much too great;

* This was the VIth general council held in the 13th year of Constantine V, surnamed Pogonatus, and the 3d year of Agathon.

so was his pomp and influence. But it was the same with the bishops of other great Sees: and the bishop of Constantinople retains the title of universal bishop to this day. Nor had the bishop of Rome any temporal dominion, nor did he pretend to any. In fine, the most decisive marks of Antichrist, idolatry and false doctrine, had not yet appeared at Rome. Superstition and vice were lamentably on the increase in the west, though a considerable degree of true piety prevailed, and some gracious effusions of the Spirit of God appeared. CENT. VII.

In the east, the influences of divine grace seem to have been withheld entirely. Men had there filled up the measure of their iniquities. Even from Origen's days a decline of true doctrine, and the spirit of sceptical philosophy, ever hostile to that of grace, kept them low in religion compared with their western brethren. How precious must the grace of the Gospel be, which, being revived in Europe, in the time of Augustine, ceased not to produce salutary effects, and to extend true religion even to the most savage nations! Attempts indeed to propagate, what they call Christianity, were made in the east by the Nestorians, who dwelt in Persia and India, and by the Eutychians, who flourished in Egypt. The former were parcularly successful in increasing their numbers; but I have nothing to produce of real godliness as the result of the labours of either party. Abyssinia, which from the days of Athanasius, always considered herself as a daughter of Alexandria, receives thence her pontiff to this day: when Eutychianism prevailed in Egypt, it did so of course in Abyssinia, and has been the prevalent form in both countries, ever since the seventh century. The Mahometan conquerors reduced the antient professors of orthodoxy into a state of extreme insignificancy; and this was one of the scourges of God by the

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Arabian imposture, namely, that while the orthodox were crushed, heretics were encouraged and protected by those conquerors. Orthodox patriarchs existed indeed in Egypt for some time after the Saracen conquest: but ignorance, superstition, and immorality, still abounded, and have now continued to abound for many centuries. The east, whence the light first arose, has long sat in darkness, with the exception of some individuals from age to age, such as John the Almoner, and a few others, who have been mentioned in this chapter. God will have a church upon earth, and it shall be carried to the most despised regions, rather than extinguished entirely. In these works of his providence there is a significant voice which speaks to Europe in an awful tone.

Africa fell under the power of the Mahometans toward the close of this century. It had long shared in the general corruption, and it shared in the general punishment. The region, which has so often refreshed us with evangelical light and energy, where Cyprian suffered, and where Augustine taught, was consigned to Mahometan darkness, and must henceforth be very nearly dismissed from these memoirs.

CHAP. IV.

AUTHORS OF THIS CENTURY.

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ISIDORE, of Sevil, flourished in the former part of it: he governed the church of Sevil for forty years, having succeeded his brother Leander, of whom we have made honourable mention already. This writer was voluminous, and, with all due allowance for the superstition of the age, appears to have been

* Du Pin, Cent. 7.

sincerely pious. But perhaps the most useful part of his works is his collection of sentences out of Gregory. He seems to have been providentially given to Spain, in order to preserve some of the ancient learning, and to prevent men from sinking into total ignorance and rusticity. CENT. VII.

Columban must be mentioned also as an author, though we have already celebrated him in the character in which he shone far more, namely, of a missionary. He was, no doubt, pious and fervent: he wrote monastic rules, and while every part of his writings is infected with the servile genius of the times, and the spirit of bondage, which had seized the Church, one sentence retrieves his character, and with it I shall dismiss him. "We must have recourse to Christ the fountain of life." Sophronius of Jerusalem wrote a synodal letter to confute the Monothelites. His part in that controversy has been stated already. He asserted, that we shall rise with the same body, and that the punishments of hell are eternal. The most remarkable thing in him is the soundness of his doctrine, which he adorned with genuine piety and purity of life.

Martin, bishop of Rome, whose sufferings from the tyrant Constans have been succinctly described, was one of the greatest men of the age. Some of his letters are extant, and they indicate both strength of mind, and zeal in religion. Amandus, bishop of Utrecht, in writing to him, declared that he was so grieved to find some clergymen to have lived lasciviously after their ordination, that he was tempted to quit his bishopric. Martin dissuaded him; and at the same time exhorted him to exercise salutary discipline on the offenders, declaring, that such clergymen should be deposed entirely from the sacerdotal function, that they may repent in a private condition, and may find mercy at the last day. He exhorts Amandus to undergo patiently all trials for the salvation of the sheep, and

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the service of God. This Roman prelate, doubtless was sincere, and he appears to have defended evangelical truth with much firmness. And it was for a branch of scriptural doctrine that he suffered with consistency and integrity.

I mention Maximus, his fellow-sufferer in the same cause. His writings are too scholastical to merit much attention, though he was, doubtless, a very able reasoner, and, what is infinitely better, a pious and upright man.

I might swell the list, with the names of writers little known, and of little use. Learning was very low: the taste of the age was barbarous: we have seen, however, that Christ had then a Church; and the reader, if he pleases, may travel through still darker scenes; yet I trust some glimmerings of the presence of Christ will appear.

CENTURY VIII.

CHAP. I.

VENERABLE BEDE, THE ENGLISH PRESBYTER.

CHAP. I.

THE Church-history of our country, written by this renowned father, was continued to the year 731. I have extracted from it that which suited my purpose. He is said to have died in 735. Of his age the accounts are very contradictory. The history of the VIIIth century will properly begin with a brief narrative of the life and works of this historian.

Bede died, A. D. 735.

He was born near Durham, in a village now called Farrow, near the mouth of the Tyne. Losing both his parents at the age of seven years, he was, by the care of relations, placed in the monastery of Weremouth, was there educated with much strictness, and appears from his youth to have been devoted to the service of God. He was afterwards removed to the neighbouring monastery of Jerrow, where he ended his days. He was looked on as the most learned man of his time. Prayer, writing, and teaching, were his familiar employments during his whole life*. He was ordained deacon in the nineteenth, and presbyter in the thirtieth, year of his age. He gave himself wholly to the study of the Scriptures, the instruction of disciples, the offices of public worship, and the composition of religious and literary works. The life of such a person can admit of little variety. It was not, however,

Born, A. D. 672.

* Life of Bede, prefixed to his works. Cologne edition.

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for want of opportunity that he lived thus obscure. His character was celebrated through the western world: the bishop of Rome invited him warmly to the metropolis of the Church; but, in the eyes of Bede, the great world had no charms. It does not appear that he ever left England; and, however infected with the fashionable devotion to the Roman See, he was evidently sincere and disinterested.

Constantly engaged in reading or writing, he made all his studies subservient to devotion. As he was sensible, that it is by the grace of God, rather than by natural faculties, that the most profitable knowledge of the Scriptures is acquired, he mixed prayer with his studies. He never knew what it was to do nothing. He wrote on all the branches of knowledge then cultivated in Europe. In Greek and Hebrew he had a skill very uncommon in that barbarous age; and, by his instructions and example, he raised up many scholars. Knowledge indeed in those times was more familiar in the British isles than in any part of Europe.

The catalogue of Bede's works exhibits the proofs of his amazing industry. His Church-history is to us the most valuable, because it is the only British monument of the Church which we have for the seventh century. His expositions and homilies, however, must in that dearth of knowledge have been abundantly useful. The ignorance of the times is indeed but too visible in him; and he followed Augustine and other fathers so closely, and collected so much from various authors, that his want of original genius is more than problematical. Genuine godliness, rather than taste and genius, appear on the face of his writings. His labours in the sciences show a love of learning; however inconsiderable his acquisitions must appear, in comparison with the attainments of the present age.

In his last sickness he was afflicted for two weeks with a difficulty of breathing. His mind was, how-

ever, serene and cheerful, his affections were heavenly; and amidst these infirmities he daily taught his disciples. A great part of the night was employed in prayer and thanksgiving; and the first employment of the morning was to ruminate on the Scriptures, and to address his God in prayer. "God scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," was frequently in his mouth. CENT. VIII.

Even amidst his bodily weakness he was employed in writing two little treatises. Perceiving his end to draw near, he said, "If my Maker please, I will go to him from the flesh, who, when I was not, formed me out of nothing—my soul desires to see Christ my king in his beauty." He sang glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and expired with a sedateness, composure, and devotion, which surprised all who were present at this scene. Account of the death of Bede.

This is the account of his death by one of his disciples; and a very few quotations from his expository writings will show on what solid grounds these religious affections were founded. In expounding Acts ii. 28, "thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance;" he says, "These things are not only to be understood of our Lord, who needed no other guide to overcome the kingdom of death, but having received at once the fulness of divine strength and wisdom, was able to conquer death by himself, rise again to life, and ascend to his Father, but also of his elect, who, by his gift, find the well of life, by which they rise to the bliss which they lost in Adam, and shall be filled with heavenly joy. This shall be our perfect bliss, when we shall see him face to face. Philip knew this well, when he said, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us'. That pleasure of seeing the face of God sufficeth: there shall be nothing more;

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nor is there a call for any thing more, when he is seen who is above all*."

"Other innumerable methods of saving men being set aside, this was selected by Infinite Wisdom, namely, that, without any diminution of his divinity, he assumed also humanity; and in humanity procured so much good to men, that temporal death, though not due from him, was yet paid, to deliver them from eternal death, which was due from them. Such was the efficacy of that blood, that the devil, who slew Christ by a temporary death which was not due, cannot detain in eternal death any of those who are clothed with Christ, though that eternal death be due for their sins †."

Such were the evangelical views, which, in a night of superstition, burst forth from the northern extremity of England. But the doctrines revived by Augustine flourished still in Europe in a good degree, though in no part more than in the British isles. Indeed monastic superstition grew among our fathers at the same time excessively, and, in the end, entirely corrupted the doctrines. But that was not yet the case: superstition itself, though deplorably childish and absurd, was not incompatible with sincerity and the fear of God. The real nature of the Gospel, and its practical exercise in faith, humility, and true mortification of sin, were understood and felt by the Saxon presbyter, whose comments on St. Paul's epistles are, in depth of understanding and penetration into the sacred sense, even with all the defects of the times, greatly superior to several admired expositions of this, which calls itself an enlightened age.

* Retractat. on Acts of the Apostles. I cannot prevail on myself to omit this passage, though the expression of Philip be not so pertinent to the purpose of the author, as some other portions of Scripture might have been.

† On Rom. v.

The seventh chapter to the Romans may deservedly be called a touchstone of spiritual understanding. Too many modern divines, by supposing that the Apostle is only describing the conflict between reason and passion, after the manner of the ancient philosophers, have demonstrated their own total ignorance of St. Paul's argument. He only, who feels, abhors, and sincerely struggles with indwelling sin, who is conscious of its unutterable malignity, and is humbled under this conviction, can understand the Apostle aright, and prize the real grace of God in Jesus Christ. Such was Bede! the very best expositors in the most evangelical times do not much exceed him, in clearness and solidity, in the exposition of this chapter. I will not delay the reader by quoting largely from his explication. Suffice it to give a hint or two. He observes, from the Apostle, that the desire of sinning itself is increased by the prohibitions of the law, which therefore increases sin, without giving any strength; and the purport of this part of the divine economy is, that men groaning under the law might come to the Mediator. He strongly contends, that the wretched carnal person, sold under sin, in this chapter, was no personated character, but Paul himself, and he confirms this by observing, from the epistle to the Phillippians, that the Apostle confessed "he was not perfect, and had not attained unto the resurrection of the dead;" and from another epistle, that he was even buffeted by Satan, and had a thorn in his flesh, lest he should be exalted above measure. This inward warfare, our author contends, must last through life. "In the resurrection, every thing," says he, "shall be perfected. In the mean time it is a great thing to keep the field, and remain unconquered, though not discharged from war."

CENT. VIII.

But though he fully reached the scope of Augustine, from whose labours he profited abundantly, he seems never to go beyond it. Indeed his expo-

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sitions are extracts and compilations from the fathers, chiefly from Augustine. In this sense they were his own, that he understood and experienced their truth and efficacy. But judgment and industry, not genius and invention, were the talents of this writer. Though the thought I am going to mention is most probably not his own, yet it gives so instructive a view of the state of all mankind, ranked in four classes, that I cannot prevail on myself to withhold it from the reader. Speaking of the conflict with indwelling sin, described in Rom. vii, he observes, "that there are those who fight not at all, and are drawn away by their lusts; others who fight indeed, but are overcome, because they fight without faith, and in their own strength; others who fight, and are still in the field, not overcome, which was the case with St. Paul and all true Christians in this world; and lastly, others who have overcome, and are at rest above." Bede, like Augustine, allegorizes to excess, and is very often desultory and vague in his comments: his views of Solomon's Song are solid, though in the explication too minute: still more faulty perhaps are his expositions on the tabernacle and on Solomon's temple. His homilies, at the time, must have been very edifying, notwithstanding the puerile fancies with which they are discoloured. On the whole I shall venture to observe, what, however, no reader will be prepared to receive, unless his mind has been seasoned with a degree of experimental religion, that the comments of Bede are far more solid and judicious than those of many modern, improperly called rational, divines; though in the former the errors of fanciful allegory may abound, and in the latter there may every where appear an air of strict and accurate argumentation. The reason is, because the former, being possessed of the true meaning of the Apostle on the whole, supports and illustrates it throughout, though he fails in detached passages, because of the

desultory ebullitions of a vicious taste, which predominated in his time; the latter with "semblance of worth, not substance," are accurate and just in many particulars, but from their system of notions, which is extremely opposite to that of St. Paul, mislead their readers altogether, in regard to the main drift of the argument. CENT. VIII.

A year before our presbyter's death, he wrote a letter to Egbert, archbishop of York, which deserves to be immortalized, for the solid sense which it exhibits, a quality with which Bede was very eminently endowed *.

"Above all things," says he, "avoid useless discourse, and apply yourself to the Holy Scriptures, especially the epistles to Timothy and Titus; to Gregory's pastoral care, and his homilies on the Gospel.—It is indecent for him, who is dedicated to the service of the Church, to give way to actions or discourse unsuitable to his character.—Have always those about you who may assist you in temptation: be not like some bishops, who delight to have those about them who love good cheer, and divert them with trifling and facetious conversation.

"Your diocese is too large to allow you to go through the whole in one year; therefore appoint presbyters, in each village, to instruct and administer the sacraments; and let them be studious, that every one of them may learn, by heart, the Creed and the Lord's prayer; and that if they do not understand Latin, they may repeat them in their own tongue. I have translated them into English, for the benefit of ignorant presbyters. I am told, that there are many villages in our nation, in the mountainous parts, the inhabitants of which have never seen a bishop or a pastor; and yet they are obliged to pay their dues to the bishop.

"The best means to reform our Church, is to increase the number of bishops. Who sees not, how

* Bede's Works, Paris edit. p. 46.

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much more reasonable it is for numbers to share this burden? Gregory therefore directed Augustine to appoint twelve bishops to be under the archbishop of York as their metropolitan. I wish you would fill up this number with the assistance of the king of Northumberland*."

"I know it is not easy to find an empty place for the erection of a bishopric. You may choose some monastery for the purpose.—In truth, there are many places which have the name of monasteries without deserving it."—He goes on to show how, for thirty years past, the scandalous abuse of monasteries had prevailed, and how useless many of them were to church and state, as they preserved neither piety nor decency. He directs Egbert to see that his flock be instructed in Christian faith and practice, and that they frequently attend the communion. He finds fault with the excessive multiplication of monks, and expresses his fears, lest, in process of time, the state should be destitute of soldiers to repel an invasion. This last observation is of a piece with another at the close of his history, that many Northumbrians in his days, both nobles and private men, employed themselves and their children more in monastic vows than in the exercise of arms. "What effect this will have," says he, "the next generation will bear witness." It is no common instance of judgment in one who had always been a monk, to notice these evils†. How they happened to be so very fashionable in our island, it is not hard to explain. Our ancestors were, doubtless, much indebted under God to the

* His name was Cedulph. Two years after Bede's death, he gave up his crown, and lived twenty-two years in a monastery. His mind was most probably truly devout, though the spirit of the times led him into a degenerate method of showing it.

† Even kings gave themselves up to retirements of this kind, and there want not instances, among the Saxon princes, of pilgrimages to Rome of a religious nature.

Roman See. Christianity, before the missions of Gregory, was very low in England. A real spirit of godliness, the sincere practice and true understanding of the Gospel had been, through the bishops of Rome, introduced among barbarians. Even the benefits thence resulting to society must have been great. Gratitude and affection would naturally lead our ancestors, in those superstitious ages, to monastic excesses. And if the evils of which Bede complains, be strong proofs of the superstitious taste, they are proofs also of the spirit of piety which subsisted among them. While Bede lived, in no part of the world was godliness better understood and practised than among our ancestors. In a synod held by Cuthbert, archbishop of Canterbury, about the middle of this century, at Cloveshoo *, there were twelve prelates, with Ethelbald, king of the Mercians. The canons of this synod would have done honour to the purest times, and they seem to have been inspired by the genius of Bede. The clergy are directed to have fellowship with one another, to serve God in one spirit of faith, hope, and charity, to pray for one another, to attend to the duties of the sabbath, and, in fine, the same things are repeated, which are to be found in Bede's letter to Egbert.

CENT. VIII.

Let us not pride ourselves in a fancied superiority to our forefathers: a vanity of this sort seems to be the disease of the present age;—but men were not all without understanding in those dark seasons.—The indiscriminating censures of Mosheim on whole centuries, seem to show more contempt and ill-humour than discernment. Bede alone knew more of true religion, both doctrinal and practical, than numbers of ecclesiastics put together at this day; which will clearly appear, if we do but free him from superstitious rubbish, and examine what he is internally.

* Now Cliff, near Rochester. Warner.

CHAP. II.

MISCELLANEOUS PARTICULARS.

CHAP. II.

A LITTLE after the beginning of this century, Lambert, bishop of Maestricht, was murdered.—He had succeeded Theodard, under whom he had been educated, and, for forty years, had adorned the Gospel by a life of piety and charity. He had been seven years deprived of his See amidst the civil confusions of France, but had been re-established about the year 681. This prelate had exerted himself with much zeal in his diocese, and laboured with success in the conversion of the pagans, who were in his neighbourhood. His patience, as well as his doctrine, had a salutary effect. It is not, however, in the power of the wisest and best of men to restrain the tempers of their friends and relations. Two brothers, Gallus and Riold, were intolerably violent in plundering the church of Maestricht, and infesting the neighbourhood. Lambert's relations, particularly two nephews, returned evil for evil, and slew them, much against the will of the bishop. Doubtless, the brothers ought to have applied to the civil magistrate, though justice was at that time very ill administered in France. Dodo, a powerful baron of the neighbourhood, a relation of the robbers, was determined to revenge their deaths upon the bishop himself; and he attacked him with armed men at Leodium* upon the Meuse. Lambert, in his first agitation upon the news of their approach, seized a sword, but recollecting himself, and lifting up his heart to God in prayer, he laid aside the sword, and composed himself to suffer. Two of his nephews

Lambert restored. A. D. 681.

* Now Liege. Fleury, XLI. 16.

other places*, so that the light of his Gospel was never removed from the earth. The most marvellous event in such cases is, that men seem not at all conscious of their crimes, nor perceive the avenging hand of God upon them. For the nominal Christians of the day were insensible of their condition; and, though the Arabians were evidently making large strides toward universal dominion, it was not till they had advanced into the heart of France, and ravaged that country in a dreadful manner, that any strong efforts were made to withstand them. In the year 732, however, they were totally defeated near Poictiers, by the heroic Charles Martel. An event memorable in history, because by it the providence of God stopped the progress of the Arabian locusts. It is astonishing, that all the civilized nations had not long ago united in a league, which would have been equally just and prudent, to stem the torrent which threatened the desolation of mankind. Those who had, for ages, trusted more in relics, altars, austerities, pilgrimages, than in Christ crucified, and had lived in deceit, avarice, and uncleanness, were suffered to yield themselves a prey to devouring invaders.—Adored be that Providence, which, in the crisis, preserved Europe from complete desolation, and, by saving France from those barbarians, has still left a people to serve God in these western regions†.

CENT. VIII.

Saracens defeated by C. Martel. A. D. 732.

* This will be illustrated in Chap. IV.

† The plague of the locusts, Rev. ix. continued five months, that is, 150 years, a day being reckoned for a year in prophetical language. It may be difficult to reckon exactly the time of the extension of the Arabian conquests, because of the inaccuracy and confusion of historians. But divine truth was exact, no doubt; and under every possible way of computation, the period of about 150 years will properly limit the duration of the Saracen conquests.

CHAP. III.

THE CONTROVERSY ON IMAGES. THE MATURITY OF ANTICHRIST.

CHAP. III.

Beginning of the Popedom.

ABOUT the year 727, the Greek emperor began open hostility with the bishop of Rome, and, to use the words of Sigonius*, Rome and the Roman dukedom passed from the Greek to the Roman bishop. It would have been more accurate to say, that a foundation was then laid for the temporal power of that prelate, than that it was actually established. However, as it was established a few years after, and a rupture commenced at the period just mentioned, I shall assume this as the most proper date that I know of, for the beginning of popedom, which from this time is to be regarded as Antichrist indeed; for it set itself by temporal power to support false doctrine, and particularly that, which deserves the name of idolatry.

The marvellous propensity of all ages to the sin of idolatry, which implies a departure of the heart from the one living and true God, must originate in some steady principles existing in the nature of fallen man. The true account of this extraordinary and lamentable fact seems to be as follows.—God is an immaterial, self-existent Being, of infinite power and goodness, and, as our Maker and Preserver, he has an unquestionable claim to our supreme veneration and affection. Man, considered as a rational creature, is endowed with faculties abundantly sufficient for the discovery of this great and perfect Being, so far as his own duties and interests are concerned. This has frequently been proved, by able moralists, in the way of argument, and is

* Sigon. Hist. de Regn. Italic, B. III.

expressly affirmed to be the case by St. Paul, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where it is said, that "that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead;—so that they are without excuse." CENT. VIII.

In fact, however, fallen man has never, by the mere use of his reason, found out God to any good purpose, and worshipped him accordingly; and even when God by special revelation has condescended to explain and manifest his true character to a particular people, few of that people have served him as they ought to have done for any great length of time; but they soon corrupted the divine religion, and were plunged in idolatry.

The Jehovah of the sacred writings, and the Almighty and all-perfect God, who may be discovered by sound reason, is an invisible Being, and is to be honoured, as a Spirit, with the heart, and the understanding, and without the intervention of sensible objects, as stocks or stones. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." But the history of our corrupted nature shows, that images and other sensible objects have, in all ages, offered themselves to men's minds as guides and helps to a conception of the Deity; and if, in some instances, these absurd inventions of gross idolatry have been rejected by men of learning and refinement, it has then generally happened, that intellectual figments of philosophical vanity have been substituted in their place, figments still more atheistical in their nature, and farther removed from the notion of a wise and authoritative Governor of the Universe, who enjoins the submission and dependence of his creatures, requires their obedience, and dispenses justice impartially.

The principles, which appear to account for this

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apostasy and opposition to the divine Will, may be comprehended under the terms pride, self-love, self-righteousness, and desire of independence; or, indeed, under the single term pride alone, if we use that expression according to its most extensive application. Fallen man is too proud, practically to feel and confess his relative ignorance and inanity, when compared with the Supreme Author of all things; and the same principle prevents him from placing his supreme regard and esteem on God, though reason dictates, and revelation commands this duty. He loves himself and his own gratifications too well. Then it is easy to understand, that pride and self-righteousness are nearly synonimous expressions: a proud being will never esteem his own "righteousness as filthy rags," (Isaiah lxiv. 6.): will never cordially beg for pardon of his sins: he has too good an opinion of his own labours, inventions, and performances; in a word, he is self-righteous; and, in a similar way, it is plain, that the same Being will aim at independence, and be impatient of control. In such a dangerous and corrupt state of human affections, the broad and crowded road to idolatry, which is the object we are seeking, is not difficult to be traced. For, whether we consider pride as a comprehensive principle, evolving itself, according to the explanation just given, in various mischievous operations; or, whether we chuse to confine the meaning of the term, no one will doubt, but that in fact, mankind in all ages have been grievously wanting in humility, have proudly set themselves up against God, have been actuated by inordinate self-love, and not submitting to the righteousness of God, and impatient of control, have endeavoured to establish their own righteousness. The existence of these principles and inclinations implies an absolute departure of the heart from the living God; and when that has once taken place through the action of some steady cause,

the progress to idolatry, or to some species of atheism, nearly allied to idolatry, is the next step. Man has departed from the true God, and there must be some device to quiet conscience. Thus, in rude and barbarous times, the proud, self-righteous devotee will naturally have recourse to the sottish invention of the worship of wood, or stone, or metals, and become a gross idolater. He will burn part of the wood with fire, and of the rest he will make a god, and kneel before it. The discovery mightily pleases him: he has found out a god, exactly suited to his taste; a god, who will easily pardon his vices, set a high value on his imagined virtues, and be constantly propitious to him; a god, who is not a universal Governor or Benefactor, but who is particularly kind to himself and his countrymen; a god, whom he can see and handle, and in whom he may pride himself, as having contrived and finished it with the tongs and hammer, or with the plane and compass; a god, who is local and tutelar, and over which he himself has considerable power: he can place it in his temple, in his chamber, or in the camp. CENT. VIII.

The ancient idolaters, by their images, often represented deceased chiefs, or heroes, or kings, who were still supposed to possess a superintending influence over the affairs of men; and, not unfrequently, these departed beings appear to have ranked among the most wicked of mankind. In more modern times, even Christianity itself has been disgraced with the adoration of images, representations, and relics of saints; nor has the abominable superstition always sufficiently taken care, that the supposed saints themselves should be reputable characters.

In ages of great learning and refinement, the same principle of pride, which in religious concerns, blinding the understanding and corrupting the affections, effectually draws the heart from the

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living and true God, induces men to profess a reverence for abstruse and intellectual figments, as nature, a principle of order, or the soul of the universe. These notions of God, which prevail in polished seasons of the world, in one sense merit the imputation of idolatry, in another of atheism; and, in any possible interpretation, they must be deemed equivocal, unintelligible, and pernicious. The species of idolatry are exceedingly various; but they differ not much either in their source or their tendency. In all circumstances, man is miserable and blind, if he be not seeking and worshipping the true God in spirit and truth. If, in breach of the second commandment, he represent the glory of Jehovah by images, or if, in breach of the first, he set up a divinity opposite to Jehovah, in both cases he forms a deceitful basis for salvation and happiness, and directly affronts the perfections of God. Such practices are, therefore, forbidden throughout the Scripture, in the most positive manner.

The guilt of idolatry, though no sin is so much spoken against throughout the Old Testament, is not so offensive to natural conscience as that of crimes committed against our fellow-creatures.—Many persons are apt to wonder why the Israelites were so prone to it; not considering nor knowing their own idolatry, which works in a way more suited to present times and circumstances. But whoever understands, that idolatry implies the departure of the heart from the living God, and the fixing of it on something else; that to distrust his word, and to put confidence in some sensible object, by which we would represent him to our minds,—still further, that to glory in our own strength and righteousness, instead of seeking salvation by grace through faith only, proceeds from pride, and pours all possible contempt on the divine Majesty, will not wonder at God's indignation against this sin, will see how naturally it operates on the human mind, and how

it affords a complete demonstration of the apostasy of man.

The ancient Church of God were distinguished from the nations all around, by the most express prohibitions of this sin. They were directed not to worship any but the living God, nor even Jehovah himself by any images whatever; much less were they allowed to worship any creature by representations, which would be to break the two first commandments by the same act. He, who knows the propensity of his own heart to distrust the providence and grace of God, and how eagerly we catch at any human relief, instead of patiently waiting upon God in trouble, will not wonder that the Israelites worshipped the calf in the absence of Moses, nor think the sin small, because they intended to honour Jehovah by the symbol.

Under the Gospel dispensation the prohibition of images continued, and, in the purest times, there was little occasion to dwell on the subject. God in Christ was worshipped, in spirit and in truth, by the primitive Christians: and, while they called on the Gentiles to turn from their idols to the living God, idolatry itself, in any of its forms, could scarcely find a shadow of admission into the Christian Church.

For, while men's hearts were filled with peace and joy in believing, while the doctrines of justification and regeneration were precious and all-important in their eyes, and they lived by the faith of Jesus, saw his glory, and felt in their souls the transforming power of his grace, the deceitful aids of idolatry had no charms. It was not till the knowledge of the Gospel itself was darkened and adulterated, that the miserable spirits of men had recourse to such vain refuges, and that the mind, no longer under the influence of the Holy Spirit, betook itself to the arts of sculpture and painting, in order to inflame its affections, and to kindle a false fire of

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devotion. Christians then worshipped the true God with the understanding, and whoever was converted to the faith, ceased from idolatry. And, as we have seen, Christian emperors, particularly Theodosius, destroyed image-worship in their dominions. Origen, in his treatise against Celsus, observes, that it is not possible that any, by worshipping images, should attain the knowledge of God. Athanasius and Lactantius* strongly inculcate the same truth. Toward the end of the fourth century, some approach toward this evil appeared in the Church.—Epiphanius, bishop of Cyprus, observes†, that he found a linen-cloth hanging on the church-door painted, and having in it the image of Christ, or of some saint. "Observing this," says he, "so contrary to the authority of the Scriptures, I tore the cloth." The famous Jerom published, in Latin, an epistle of Epiphanius concerning this subject, and added his own testimony on the point. So evident is it, that at that time images were absolutely prohibited in the Church of Christ.

Augustine's judgment respecting the use of images.

Augustine also gave his opinion against images. "They are of more force to pervert the soul than to instruct it." And "when images are once placed in temples, and had in honour, error creepeth in." Men, however, who had been lately turned from idols, began at length to paint or carve images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the Apostles. Jerom observes, that the errors of images passed to the Christians from the Gentiles; and Eusebius, the historian, says, that images of Peter and Paul, and

* In the three Homilies of the Church of England against Peril of Idolatry, the controversy is handled with much solidity and historical information. I have made some use of them for my purpose. It seems proper that every protestant divine should acquaint himself with the fundamentals of the controversy, and be able satisfactorily to convince himself, that popery is not, what it pretends to be, founded on the precedents of Christian antiquity.

† See Vol. II. p. 300.

of our Saviour himself, were made in his time, which he took "to be a heathenish custom." They were not, however, worshipped, nor publicly set up in churches. Paulinus, who died bishop of Nola in the year 431, caused the walls of a temple to be painted with stories taken from the Old Testament, that the people might thence receive instruction: the written word was neglected, and these poor substitutes were placed in its room. A strong sign of the growing ignorance! As the ignorance increased, these historical paintings and images increased also. Serenus, bishop of Marseilles, because of the danger of idolatry, brake to pieces the images then set up in the churches. I have already noticed the imprudent concession made by Gregory, bishop of Rome, on this occasion, to the growing superstition. Thus, six hundred years after Christ, images had begun to appear in churches, but still without idolatry. The authority of Gregory, however, had evil consequences: the spirit of idolatry grew stronger, as real spiritual knowledge decayed; and men having now, in a great measure, lost the divine way of applying to God through Christ, by faith, for the relief of their consciences, became still more prone to rely on idols. So closely connected is the doctrine of justification with purity of worship. In this respect the Roman * church advanced in corruption more rapidly than the eastern. And Grecian emperors employed themselves in destroying images and pictures, while in Italy they were held in idolatrous admiration. The evil, in truth, became incurable, because there was no clear and effectual knowledge of the Gospel, that might dissipate the clouds of error. Yet were men's opinions divided both in the east and the west; and, at length, the crisis arose, when the Christian world was formally broken into two parties on this question.

Death of Paulinus, bishop of Nola. A. D. 431.

* I say the Roman; for in other parts of the west, we shall see, that some opposition was made to idolatry.

CHAP. III.

The Emperor opposes the worship of Images.

A. D. 727.

We are now advanced to the year 727, when Leo, the Isaurian, the Greek emperor*, began openly to oppose the worship of images, and produced the rupture with the Roman See, before mentioned.—A Syrian, born of Christian parents, named Beser, who had been taken by the Mahometans, and afterwards returned to the Romans, had imbibed an opinion of the unlawfulness of the practice, having, very probably, observed the advantage which it had given to the infidels. He was in great favour with the emperor, and convinced him by his arguments, that image-worship was idolatrous. But the most eminent defender of the purity of divine worship in this point, and whom Fleury therefore, in his popish zeal, calls the author of the heresy†, was Constantine, bishop of Nacolia in Phrygia. Convinced in his judgment, and zealous to propagate what appeared to him to be right, Leo assembled the people, and with the frankness and sincerity, which marks his character, publicly avowed his conviction of the idolatry of the growing practice, and declared that images ought not to be erected for adoration. Such a declaration in the sixth century would have raised no ferment in Christendom; but idolatry had been gradually advancing as the simplicity and purity of Christian faith had decayed. Men of no religious solicitude naturally conformed themselves to the habits of the times: persons who had some concern for the soul had been so long trammelled in a variety of superstitions for the relief of conscience, and the true relief of Christ's atonement was so little understood and relished, that the emperor was evidently in the minority through the Christian world. As yet no synods had given a sanction to image-worship. Precedents of antiquity were entirely against it. The word of God, which ought to have influenced the minds of

* He is surnamed Iconomachus. He died of a severe cholic, in 741. † Fleury, B. XLII. 1. Vol. V.

men infinitely more than either, was in full opposition to the practice; but so deeply had error prevailed; so convenient did wicked men find it to commute for the indulgence of their crimes, by a zealous attachment to the idolatrous externals; and so little was the Scripture then read or studied, that the subjects of Leo murmured against him, as a tyrant and a persecutor. Even Germanus, the bishop of Constantinople, with equal zeal and ignorance, asserted that images had always been used in the Church, and declared his determination to oppose the emperor at all events. It is not necessary to give a detail of the paltry evasions and frivolous arguments, with which he endeavoured to support the idolatry. Desirous, however, of strengthening himself against the emperor, he wrote to the bishop of Rome, who warmly supported the same cause, and by reasonings of the same nature. Never was a more instructive lesson given to pastors, to teach the word of God in simplicity and faithfulness. Conscience will be disquieted at times in men not altogether given up to a reprobate mind; and, if peace by Jesus Christ, through faith alone, be not stedfastly preached, men distressed for their sins will flee to idolatry with all their might, which will give them a false peace, and confirm them in sinful practices. By the knowledge of Christ crucified alone can we be brought to a sound peace of conscience, and be constrained effectually to serve God and our neighbour in love. We have often, in the course of this history, seen this connection of sound doctrine and holy practice, and we are now stating the reverse of the picture. Nor can the spirit and principles of those Christians, who supported divine truth in the world, be so clearly understood without some knowledge of the real grounds of popery.

CENT. VIII.

He who filled the Roman See at this time was Gregory the second, whom for his open defence and

The first Pope of Rome.

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support of idolatry, I shall venture to call the first POPE of Rome. Many superstitions and abuses had been growing *; and since the decease of Gregory I. I have for the most part been silent concerning the Roman bishops, because very little of godliness appeared among them. The most honourable part of their conduct related to the encouragement of missions and the propagation of the Gospel among the Gentiles; in which, many who were actuated by the same spirit as those who had been sent by Gregory I. were successful in their provinces; and pure religion, in the fundamentals, at least, was extended into distant regions, while

* One will deserve to be specified, as it marks the decline from evangelical purity of doctrine. It was not until the days of this Gregory, that church-yards had a beginning. The dead had been usually interred near the highways, according to the Roman laws; and Christian congregations had followed the practice; at least, they had burial places remote from the city. But, in Gregory's time, the priests and monks began to offer prayers for the deceased, and received gifts from the relations for the performance of these services; on which account these ecclesiastics requested leave of Gregory, that the dead might be interred near the places of the monk's abode, or in the churches or monasteries; that the relations might have a better opportunity of joining in the funeral devotions. Cuthbert, archbishop of Canterbury, introduced the custom into England in 750; hence the origin of CHURCH-YARDS in this island used as burial grounds. The practice itself is certainly innocent; though its first origin was extremely superstitious. The attentive reader will judge hence of the progress of the doctrine of purgatory, and the avarice of the ecclesiastics connected with it; above all, of men's departure from the article of justification; which, if it had remained in any degree of purity in the Church, would have effectually excluded these abominations. See Newcombe's Hist. of the Abbey of St. Albans, p. 109. While men rested in Christ, and dared to behold themselves complete in him, they had no temptation to apply to the false refuge of prayers for the departed. In the article of death they committed their souls and bodies to their Saviour. That hope of glory being lost, they struggled, in vain, through life, with doubts and fears, and departing in uncertainty, left to the charity of friends to help out their supposed defect of merit, and "found no end, in wandering mazes lost."

Rome and Italy grew more and more corrupt. The open avowal, however, of idolatry, was reserved for Gregory II. and from this time I look on the bishops of Rome as Antichrist. CENT. VIII.

Rebellion trode on the heels of idolatry. Greece and its neighbouring islands opposed the emperor, and set up an usurper; so infatuated were men with image-worship. But the rebels were routed; and the usurper was taken and beheaded.

Leo, called also Leo III. has been so blackened by contemporary writers, that it is not easy to form a just idea of his character. The same observation may, for similar reasons, be extended to his son and successor. All that can be advanced with certainty is, that his cause was just, and his zeal sincere, though his temper was too warm. He might be a pious Christian; there is doubtless no proof to the contrary. He not only condemned the worshipping of images, but also rejected relics and the intercession of saints. But there lived none at that time capable of doing justice to the holiness of his motives, if indeed, as there is reason to hope, they were holy.

In the year 730 he published an edict against images, and after having in vain endeavoured to bring over Germanus to his views, he deposed him, and set up Anastasius in his room, who supported the emperor. There was a porch in the palace of Constantinople, in which was an image of Christ on the cross. Leo, who saw that it had been made an engine of idolatry, sent an officer to pull it down. Some women, who were there, intreated that it might be spared, but in vain. The officer mounted a ladder and struck three blows with a hatchet on the face of the figure, when the women threw him down by pulling away the ladder, and murdered him on the spot*: however, the image was pulled down

Leo's edict against Images. A. D. 730.

* This first instance of idolatrous zeal which occurs in Christendom, shows that the worshippers of images naturally

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and burnt, and a plain cross was set up in its room; for Leo only objected to the erection of an human figure. The women afterwards insulted Anastasius, as having profaned holy things. Leo put several persons to death, who had been concerned in the murder, and, such was the triumph of idolatry at length, that the murderers are honoured as martyrs, by the Greek Church, to this day! More blood was spilt on the occasion, partly through the vehemence of the emperor, and partly through the obstinacy of the idolaters.

The news flew to Rome, where the same rage for idolatry prevailed, and the emperor's statues were pulled down and trodden under foot. Italy was thrown into confusion: serious attempts were made to elect another emperor: and the pope encouraged these attempts. He also prohibited the Italians from paying tribute to Leo any longer, say the Greek writers, and some of the partisans of the Roman See, while the French writers represent him as endeavouring to quell the rebellion. It is difficult to give a fair statement of Gregory's conduct on this occasion; certain it is, that his obstinate defence of idolatry actually fomented the rebellion, and in the end, established the temporal power of his successors on the ruins of the imperial authority*. His conduct was indirectly rebellious, if it was not directly so; for he wrote to Anastasius, that if he did not return to the catholic faith, he should be deprived of his dignity †. Gregory must have known, that this was, in effect, to oppose the emperor him-

connect the idea of sanctity with the wood or stone, and therefore the charge of literally worshipping inanimate matter, which the Scriptures make against pagan idolaters, is just when applied to popish idolaters. By an induction from particulars, it were easy to prove, that the cases are similar, and, that futile distinctions and evasions may equally be applied to both, to cover and soften what cannot be vindicated in either.

* See Mosheim, Cent. VIII. C. III. † Fleury, C. XLII. 7.

self. This was one of the last acts of the Roman prelate. He was succeeded by Gregory III. who wrote to the emperor in these arrogant terms: "Because you are unlearned and ignorant, we are obliged to write to you rude discourses, but full of sense and the word of God. We conjure you to quit your pride, and hear us with humility.—You say that we adore stones, walls, and boards. It is not so, my lord; but those symbols make us recollect the persons whose names they bear, and exalt our grovelling minds. We do not look upon them as gods;—but if it be the image of Jesus, we say, "Lord, help us." If it be the image of his mother, we say, "pray to your Son to save us." If it be of a martyr, we say, "St. Stephen pray for us *."—We might, as having the power of St. Peter, pronounce punishments against you; but as you have pronounced the curse upon yourself, let it stick to you.—You write to us to assemble a general council; of which there is no need. Do you cease to persecute images and all will be quiet.—We fear not your threats; for if we go a league from Rome, toward Campania, we are secure."—Certainly this is the language of Antichrist supporting idolatry by pretences to infallibility, and despising both civil magistrates and ecclesiastical councils.

* From these specimens the reader may judge whether the pope or the emperor was better acquainted with the Scripture. A pagan philosopher would have defended gentile idolatry much in the same manner; and the dependence, which both the pagan and the papist place on the image, demonstrates, that they imagine the power of the saint or demon to be intimately connected with the image, which represents, as it were, the body, of which the object of their worship is the soul, so justly do the Scriptures describe idolaters as literally worshipping the works of their own hands, and the man of sin as worshipping demons (1 Tim. iv.) Sophistry may evade, but it cannot confute. When men cease to hold the head and to be satisfied with Christ as their all, they fall into these or similar errors. The heart, which feels not the want of the living God, as its proper nutriment, will feed on the ashes of idolatry.

CHAP. III.

Leo excommunicated by the Pope. A. D. 732.

I cannot do justice to Leo because we have not his answers to the pope. But perhaps the language of Gregory will enable the reader for himself to vindicate the emperor. It is not to be wondered at, that Leo refused to have any farther intercourse with the Roman prelate. In 732, Gregory, in a council, excommunicated all, who should remove or speak contemptuously of images. And Italy being now in a state of rebellion, Leo fitted out a fleet, which he sent thither; but it was wrecked in the Adriatic. He continued, however, to enforce his edict against images in the east, while the patrons of the fashionable idolatry supported it by various sophisms. In all his conduct Gregory now acted like a temporal prince: he supported a rebellious duke against Luitprand, king of the Lombards, his master, and fearing the vengeance of the latter, he applied to Charles Martel, mayor of the palace in France *, offering to withdraw his obedience from the emperor, and give the consulship of Rome to Charles, if he would take him under his protection †. Charles, however, by his wars with the Saracens, was prevented from complying with the pope's request. But he left his power and ambitious views to his son and successor Pepin. Charles, Gregory, and Leo, all died in the same year 741, and left to their successors the management of their respective views and contentions.

Cha. Martel, Gregory III. and Leo, die in the same year. A. D. 741.

Constantine VI, surnamed Copronymus, inherited his father Leo's zeal against images: and, as both the east and the west were precipitating themselves into idolatry, hence neither of these princes have met with a fair and impartial historian ‡. Meanwhile

* This is he who had stopped the progress of the Saracen arms. Mayor of the palace, was the title of the prime minister in France, who during the reigns of a succession of weak princes, governed with sovereign power.

† This shows that the charge of rebellion against the emperor is not unjustly made against this pope.

‡ Theophanes relates some ridiculous things of Copronymus,

the Arabians persecuted the Christians with unrelenting barbarity in the east, while the real Church of God was desolated on all sides, and suffered equally from enemies without and within her pale. Zachary was the next pope after Gregory III. an aspiring politician, who fomented discord among the Lombards, and, by his intrigues, obtained from their king Luitprand an addition to the patrimony of the Church. The Roman prelates had ceased to worship God in spirit and in truth, and were now become mere secular princes. CENT. VIII.

Zachary showed how well he merited the title of a temporal governor. He had the address to preserve still a nominal subjection to the Greek emperor, while he seized all the power of the Roman dukedom for himself, and looked out for a protector both against his lawful sovereign and against the Lombards. This was Pepin, the son and successor of Charles Martel in France, who sent a case of conscience to be resolved by the pope, namely, whether it would be just in himself to depose his sovereign Childeric III. and to reign in his room*? Zachary was not ashamed to answer in the affirmative: Pepin then threw his master into a monastery, and assumed the title of king. Zachary died soon after, viz. in the year 752. Pope Zachary dies. A. D. 752.

The Greek emperor was unable to cope with the subtilty of the pope and the violence of the Lombards. Ravenna, the capital of his dominions in Italy, was taken by king Astulphus, who had succeeded Rachis, the successor of Luitprand. This

which only prove the strength of his own prejudices, p. 346. And Fleury follows him as his guide.

* Fleury XLIII. 1. calls him a weak and contemptible prince. So the French kings had been for some time. But Gregory I. would have told Pepin, that the weakness of the sovereign's faculties gave the servant no right to usurp the master's authority. Gregory feared God: whereas idolatry had hardened the hearts of these popes, and left them no law but their own insatiable ambition.

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government, called the Exarchate, had continued in Italy about a hundred and fourscore years. Stephen, the successor of Zachary, finding the superior strength of the Lombards, now solicited the aid of Constantine, who was too much employed in the east, to send any forces into Italy. In the year 754; the emperor held a council of 338 bishops, to decide the controversy concerning images. They express themselves not improperly on the nature of the heresy*. "Jesus Christ," say they, "hath delivered us from idolatry, and hath taught us to adore him in spirit and in truth. But the devil not being able to endure the beauty of the Church, hath insensibly brought back idolatry under the appearance of Christianity, persuading men to worship the creature, and to take for God a work, to which they give the name of Jesus Christ."

Constantine VII. holds a council of 338 bishops.

A. D. 754.

Reinforced by the decrees of this council against image-worship, Constantine burnt the images, and demolished the walls, which were painted with representations of Christ or the saints; and seemed determined to exterminate all the vestiges of idolatry. In the mean time, in Italy, Stephen, pressed by the victorious arms of Astulphus, applied himself to Pepin, and wrote to all the French dukes, exhorting them to succour St. Peter, and promising them the remission of their sins, a hundred fold in this world, and in the world to come life everlasting. So rapidly advanced the popedom! A letter now was brought to the pope from the emperor, ordering him to go to Astulphus, and demand the restitution of Ravenna. Superstition was every where so strong, that there was no danger incurred by such a step; and the weakness of the emperor, and the distraction of his affairs, allowed him not to give any other sort of succour to Italy. Stephen sent to the king of the Lombards, to demand a pass. This was granted,

* Fleury, XLIII. 7.

and he set out from Rome, to go to Astulphus. A short time before he undertook this journey, messengers had arrived to him from Pepin, encouraging him to go along with them into France. Stephen arrived at Pavia, the capital of Lombardy, and, after an ineffectual interview with the king, went into France, where Pepin treated him with all possible respect, and promised to undertake an expedition into Italy to relieve the Roman See. Stephen anointed with oil the king of the Franks; and, by the authority of St. Peter, forbad the French lords, on pain of excommunication, to choose a king of another race. CENT. VIII.

Thus did these two ambitious men support one another in their schemes of rapacity and injustice. In the pope the evil was aggravated by the pretence of religion*. "It is you," says Stephen, "whom God hath chosen for this purpose by his prescience from all eternity. For whom he hath predestinated, them he also called; and, whom he called, them he also justified." It must be owned, that Stephen was fitter to conduct a negotiation, than to expound a text.

Pepin attacked Astulphus so vigorously, that, in the end, he obliged him to deliver the Exarchate, that is Ravenna, and twenty-one cities besides, to the pope. Constantine, alarmed at the danger of his dominions, in Italy, sent an embassy to king Pepin, to press him to deliver the Exarchate to its rightful sovereign: but in vain. In the issue, the pope became the proprietor of Ravenna and its dependencies, and added rapacity to his rebellion.

* Fleury, a much better divine than Stephen, is struck with the absurdity of the allusion, XLIII. 15. If I am somewhat more secular in this narration than in general, the importance of the subject, which is nothing less than the establishment of the papal power, and the vindication of faithful witnesses, who from age to age protested against it, may afford a sufficient apology. Popery once established, I shall not so minutely attend her steps, but seek the children of God, wherever they are to be found.

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From this time he not only assumed the tone of infallibility and spiritual dominion, but became literally a temporal prince. On the death of Astulphus, Desiderius, duke of Tuscany, in order to obtain the succession, promised Stephen, to deliver to him some other cities, which the Lombards had taken from the emperor. Stephen embraced the offer without hesitation, assisted Desiderius in his views, and obtained for the popedom the dutchy of Ferrara, and two other fortresses. The injured emperor, in the mean time, continued to exterminate idolatry in the east; but, whether his motives were pious or not, our ignorance of his private character will not suffer us to ascertain. The ambitious and successful Stephen held the popedom five years, and died in 757. His successor Paul, even before his appointment to that dignity, had taken care to cultivate the friendship and secure the protection of Pepin. The maritime parts of Italy still obeyed the emperor, and these, together with the Lombards, threatened the pope, from time to time; whence he was induced to write frequently to the king of France for assistance*.

Death of Pope Steph. III. A. D. 757.

Constantine forbad every where the addressing of prayers to the Virgin Mary, or to other saints, and discountenanced the monks through his dominions. He is said to have treated the worshippers of images with great barbarity, and to have been profane and vicious in his own practice. But such censures were the natural and obvious effect of his conduct.

In the year 768 died Pepin, the great supporter of the popedom. Its grandeur was, however, not yet arrived at maturity. Adrian, who was elected pope in 772, was not inferior to his predecessors in the arts of ambitious intrigue. He received the homage of Rieti and Spoleto, towns of Lombardy,

Death of Pepin. A. D. 768.

Adrian I. elected pope. A. D. 772.

* It is remarkable, that Fleury blames this pope for representing his secular affairs as if they were spiritual. 31.

and allowed them to choose a duke among themselves.—Partly by these means, and still more by the powerful alliance of Charles, the son and successor of Pepin, commonly called Charlemagne for his great exploits, he strengthened himself against the hostilities of king Desiderius. He received from the French king a confirmation of Pepin's donative of the Exarchate, with some considerable additions of territory. The friendship of ambitious men is cemented by views of interest. This was exactly the case of Charles and Adrian. In a superstitious age, the king derived from the sacred character of the Pope the most substantial addition to his reputation, and was enabled to expel Desiderius entirely from his dominions. In the year 774, he assumed the title of king of France and Lombardy. The last king of the Lombards was sent into a monastery in France, where he ended his days. In the next year, the emperor Constantine died, after having vigorously opposed image-worship all his reign. At the same time also died the Mahometan Caliph Almansor, the founder of Bagdad, which from that time became the residence of the Saracen monarchs; whose empire then began to carry more the appearance of a regular government, and ceased to be so troublesome to the remains of the old Roman empire, as it had formerly been.

CENT. VIII.

Charlemagne assumes the title of king of France and Lombardy.

A. D. 774.

Leo, the son and successor of Constantine, trode in the steps of his father and grandfather, and exercised severities on the supporters of image-worship. But, as he died in the year 780*, his wife Irene assumed the government in the name of her son Constantine, who was only ten years old. She openly and zealously supported idolatry. The east was so eagerly addicted to it, that there wanted only the authority of a sovereign to render it triumphant. Images gained the ascendancy; and the monastic

Leo IV. dies.

A. D. 780.

* Fleury, XLIV. 16.

CHAP. III.

life, which either the piety or the prudence of three emperors,—for I cannot ascertain their real character,—had much discouraged, became again victorious in Greece and Asia*.

In 784 Irene wrote to Adrian, desiring his presence at a council to be held for the support of image-worship; at least that he would send legates to it. Tarasius, bishop of Constantinople, just appointed, and perfectly harmonizing with the views of the empress, wrote to the same purport. Adrian's answer is worthy of a pope. He expresses his joy at the prospect of the establishment of image-worship; and, at the same time, testifies his displeasure at the presumption of Tarasius, in calling himself universal patriarch: he demands the restoration of St. Peter's patrimony, which, during the schism, the emperors of Constantinople had withheld; and sets before the empress the munificent pattern of Charlemagne, who had given to the Roman Church, to be enjoyed for ever, provinces, cities, and castles, once in possession of the Lombards, but which of right belonged to St. Peter. Ambition and avarice were thus covered with the thin veil of superstition. But this was the age of clerical usurpations. Large domains were now commonly annexed, by superstitious princes, to the Church, for the pardon of their sins; but the pope was the greatest gainer by this traffic. That, which is most to our purpose to observe, is the awful departure, which had commonly been made, throughout Christendom, from the all-important article of justification. While this is firmly believed and reverenced, it is impossible for men to think of commuting for their offences with heaven; and it is itself the surest

* If the plan, on which I have chosen to write a Church-history, need the authority of any writer to support it, the words of Fleury are very decisive. B. XLIV. 17. "The temporal affairs of the Church, nay, of the Roman Church, do not belong to an ecclesiastical history."

defence against clerical encroachments, superstition, idolatry and hypocrisy. But the pulpits were silent on this doctrine: during this whole century false religion grew without any check or molestation; and vices, both in public and private life, increased in proportion. CENT. VIII.

In the year 787 the second council of Nice was held under the empress: and of such a council it is sufficient to say, that it confirmed idolatrous worship*. Pope Adrian, having received the acts of the council, sent them to Charlemagne, that he might procure the approbation of the bishops of the west. But here his expectations were disappointed.— United in politics by the coincidence of interested views, they were however found to disagree in religious sentiments. Charlemagne, though illiterate himself, was one of the greatest patrons of learning: and, if he may be supposed to have been in earnest in any opinions, he would naturally be much influenced by the famous Alcuin, an Englishman, whom he cherished and esteemed. The customs and habits of the west were far from universally favouring the reigning idolatry. I am anxiously looking for the features of the Church of Christ in this very gloomy period, and I conjecture that her existence was most probably to be found in the Churches lately planted, or, in those, which were then in an infant state. Our own island was decidedly, at that time, hostile to idolatry. The British Churches execrated the second council of Nice†; and some even of the Italian bishops protested against the growing evil. Nor is it probable, that the churches of Germany, now forming, were at all disposed to receive it. Men, who

Irene calls a Council at Nice. A. D. 787.

* This was the seventh General Council; and the second of Nice. It began in September 787.

† Hoveden Annal. pars prior. p. 232. Usher, Annals, pp. 19, 20. The former of these writers tells us, that Alcuin composed the Carolin books.

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first receive Christianity from zealous teachers, are simple and sincere; nor is it easy to convince an ingenuous person, that idolatry, however qualified or explained, is allowable on the plan of the Scriptures, either of the Old or New Testament. France itself had, as yet, shown no disposition positively in favour of idolatry. The Roman See alone, in Europe, had in form supported and defended it. And experience proves, that the greatest stages of degeneracy are to be found in the Churches which have subsisted the longest.

Charlemagne could not but be struck at the discordancy of the Nicene council with the habits of the west; and was therefore so far from receiving, with implicit faith, the recommendation of it by pope Adrian, that he ordered the bishops of the west to examine the merits of the question. The issue was, the publication of the Carolin books, in which the famous Alcuin had at least a distinguished share. In these the authors find fault with a former synod held in Greece, under Constantine, which forbad the use of images. For they held the dangerous opinion of Gregory 1st, namely, that these might be set up in churches, and serve as books for the instruction of the people. But they condemn, in very free terms, the late Grecian synod, which enjoined the worship of images. They find fault with the flattering addresses made by the Greek bishops to pope Adrian. They allow the primacy of St. Peter's See, but are far from founding their faith on the pope's decrees. They condemn the worship of images by scriptural arguments, by no means impertinent or contemptible. These, however, need not be repeated on the present occasion*.

Engilbert, the ambassador of Charles, presented these books to Adrian. This ambitious politician, who subsisted by the protection of Charlemagne, and who was concerned to maintain the honour of

* See Du Pin, Councils of 8th century.

his See, replied with great prudence. It is evident, from his whole conduct, that his object was the temporal interests of the popedom. Hence his answer to Charles was tame and insipid, and his defence of image-worship weak and inconclusive *. Charles and the French Churches persevered in their own middle practice: they used images, but they abhorred the adoration of them. In the year 794, at Frankfort upon the Maine, a synod was held, consisting of 300 bishops, who condemned the second council of Nice, and the worship of images. In this synod, Paulinus, bishop of Aquileia, in Italy, bore some share. All his life, however, Adrian continued on good terms with Charlemagne. He died in the course of the next year, and was succeeded by Leo III. Political intrigue, and secular artifice, not theological study, was then the practice of Roman bishops. The Irish, at this time, particularly excelled in divinity, travelled through various countries, and became renowned for their learning; and the superior light, exhibited by England and France in the controversy of images, seems to prove that these countries, in their knowledge of Scripture, and also in their regard for its doctrines, far exceeded Rome. Yet so strongly were men prejudiced in favour of the dignity of the Roman See, that it still remained in the height of its power, and was enabled in process of time to communicate its idolatrous abominations through Europe. In the east the worship of images was triumphant, but as yet not universal †.

CENT. VIII.

A synod held at Frankfort. A. D. 794.

The year 795 terminated the life and the popedom of Adrian I.

This chapter contains the narrative of the most fatal events which the Church had ever seen. The

* This is allowed by Du Pin. Councils of 8th century.

† Irene, toward the close of this century, viz. about the year 797, dethroned her son Constantine, and put out his eyes with such violence, that he lost his life. This monster, a worthy patroness of idolatry, then reigned alone, and co-operated with the pope of Rome, in the support of Satan's kingdom. She was deposed and banished by Nicephorus, A. D. 802.

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Arian heresy had disfigured and deeply wounded her constitution, but she had recovered, and confounded this adversary. The Pelagian poison had operated for a time; but its detection and expulsion had even contributed to recover her health, and to restore her to a great degree of apostolical purity. Other heresies, which affected the doctrine of the Trinity, had been successfully opposed: superstition, for a number of centuries, had sullied her beauty, but had left her vitals untouched. Idolatry, at length, aided by the same superstitious propensity, prevailed to disunite her from Christ, her living head. The reigning powers, both in the east and the west, were overgrown with false worship: even those parts of the west, which as yet were not disposed to receive idolatry, were deeply prepared for the gradual admission of it, partly by the growing of superstition, and partly by the submission of all the European Churches to the domination of the Roman See. There the seat of Antichrist was firmly fixed. Rebellion against the lawful power of the magistrate, the most arrogant claims to infallibility, and the support of image-worship, conspired with the temporal dominion lately obtained by the bishop of Rome, to render him the tyrant of the Church. His dominions, indeed, were not large; but, in conjunction with the proud pretensions of his ecclesiastical character, they gave him a superlative dignity in the eyes of all Europe. It was evident that the face of the whole Church was altered: from the year 727, to about the year 2000, we have the dominion of the Beast*; and the prophesying of the witnesses in sackcloth, which was to continue 1260 days, or forty and two months, that is, for 1260 years. We must now look for the real Church, either in distinct individual saints, who, in the midst of popery, were preserved by effectual grace in vital union with the Son of God, or, in

Corruptions of Christ's religion had begun to prevail.

A. D. 727.

* Rev. xi. and xiii.

associations of true Christians, formed in different regions, which were in a state of persecution and much affliction. Where then was the Church in the eighth century? She still subsisted; and the opposition made to idolatry by Charles and the council of Frankfort, demonstrates her existence.—Nothing but the influence of principles very opposite to those which were fashionable at Rome can account for such events, at a time when the dignity of the Roman See was held in universal veneration. After all, it is in the propagation of the Gospel among the pagans, that the real Church is chiefly to be seen in this century. Some real work of this kind was carrying on, while the popedom was forming; and, by the adorable Providence of God, pious missionaries, who entered not into the recent controversies, but were engaged in actions purely spiritual, were patronized and supported in preaching Christ among foreign nations by the same popes of Rome, who were opposing his grace in their own *. Their ambition led them to cherish the zeal of the missionaries, but with how different a spirit! To this scene let us now direct our attention.

* Should any persons startle that I call image-worship by no better name than idolatry, and rank pagan and papal practices in the same class, I would refer such to the censure of St. Paul on the Galatians, iv. 8, 9. Idolatry being with them merely mental, originated in a self-righteous principle, and the Apostle looks on them as worshippers of false gods, and informs them that they were returning again to bondage. How much more justly may image-worship be called "the doing service to them which by nature are no gods," where the idolatry is both mental and external!

CHAP. IV.

THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN THIS CENTURY, INCLUDING THE LIFE OF BONIFACE, ARCHBISHOP OF MENTZ.

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WILLIBROD* with other English missionaries, continued to labour with success in the conversion of the Frisons. His episcopal seat was, as we have seen †, at Utrecht; for fifty years he preached, founded churches and monasteries, and appointed new bishops. The consequence of his labours was, that great numbers of pagans were received within the pale of the Church.

The ‡ great light of Germany in this century was an Englishman named Winfrid, born at Kirton in Devonshire, about the year 680. He was brought up in the monastic life from infancy. His residence was in the monastery of Nutcell, in the diocese of Winchester, which was afterwards destroyed by the Danes, and was never rebuilt. Here he became acquainted with the sacred and secular learning of the times. At the age of 30, he was ordained priest, on the recommendation of his abbot, and laboured with much zeal in preaching the word of God. His spirit was ardent, and he longed to be employed as a missionary in the conversion of pagans. The example of a number of pious persons of his own country might, no doubt, have great influence with him; for we have seen already, that the zeal of spreading the Gospel was peculiarly strong in the British isles. He went over with two monks into Friezeland about the year 716. He

Winfrid, an English Missionary. A. D. 716.

* Fleury, fifth Vol. XLI. 1.

† See page 114 of this volume.

‡ Fleury, XLI. 35, &c. Alban Butler, Vol. 6.

proceeded to Utrecht "to WATER, where Willibrod had PLANTED;" but finding that circumstances rendered it impracticable at present to preach the Gospel there, he returned into England with his companions, to his monastery. CENT. VIII.

On the death of the abbot of Nutcell, the society would have elected Winfrid in his room; but the monk, steady to his purpose, refused to accept the Presidency; and, with recommendatory letters from the bishop of Winchester, went to Rome, and presented himself to the pope, expressing a desire of being employed in the conversion of infidels. Gregory II. encouraged his zeal, and gave him a commission of the most ample and unlimited nature in the year 719.

With this commission Winfrid went into Bavaria and Thuringia. In the first country he reformed the Churches, in the second he was successful in the conversion of infidels. Here also he observed, how true religion, where it had been planted, was almost destroyed by false teachers: some pastors, indeed, were zealous for the service of God, but others were given up to scandalous vices: the English missionary beheld their state, and the ill effects of it on the people with sorrow; and laboured with all his might, to recover them to true repentance.

It was with sincere delight that he afterwards learned that the door, which had been shut against his first attempts in Friezeland, was now opened for preaching the gospel in that country. Rat-bod, king of the Frisons, who had planted idolatry afresh among his subjects, was dead, and the obstacles were removed. Winfrid returned into Friezeland, and for three years co-operated with Willibrod. The pale of the Church was hence enlarged: churches were erected: many received the word of God; and idolatry was more and more subdued.

Willibrod, declining in strength through old age, chose Winfrid for his successor. I have before

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observed, that the duration of his pastoral labours, in his mission, was no less than fifty years. The example of this great and holy person had long before this stirred up others to labour in the best of causes. Soon after that he, with eleven companions in 690, had begun to preach the Gospel in Friezeland, two brothers of the English nation went over into the country of the ancient Saxons, in order to preach to the idolaters. They were both called Ewald. They arrived in this country about the year 694, and meeting with a certain steward, desired him to conduct them to his lord. They were employed all the way in prayer, in singing psalms and hymns. The barbarians fearing lest these men might draw their lord over to Christianity, murdered both the brothers; and thus, toward the close of the foregoing century, it pleased God to take to himself two persons who had devoted themselves to preach the Gospel of his Son among the heathen. The time of the more peculiar visitation of Germany was reserved for the age which we are now reviewing.

Two other English Missionaries.

A. D. 694.

It must have been extremely delightful to Willibrod, to have met with a coadjutor so zealous and sincere as Winfrid. However, the latter declined the offer, because the pope had enjoined him to preach in the eastern parts of Germany; and he felt himself bound to perform his promise. It is not possible, indeed, to conceive such a man as Gregory to have had any other views than those of secular ambition in exacting this promise from Winfrid. But it seems also equally apparent, that the motives of the latter were holy and spiritual. Willibrod acquiesced in Winfrid's desires, and dismissed him with his blessing. The younger missionary departed immediately, and came into Hesse, to a place called Omenbourg, belonging to two brothers, who were nominal Christians, but practical idolaters. Winfrid's labours were successful, both on them and

their subjects: and, throughout Hesse, or at least a very great part of it, even to the confines of Saxony, he erected the standard of truth, and upheld it with much zeal, to the confusion of the kingdom of Satan. It ought not, however, to be concealed, that Winfrid suffered great hardships in a country so poor and uncultivated as the greater part of Germany then was; that he supported himself at times by the labour of his hands, and was exposed to imminent peril from the rage of the obstinate pagans. CENT. VIII.

After some time he returned to Rome, was kindly received by Gregory II. and was consecrated bishop of the new German Churches, by the name of Boniface. There seems, even in that little circumstance, something of the policy of the Roman See. A Roman name was more likely to procure from the German converts respect to the pope, than an English one. Gregory, moreover, solicitous to preserve his dignity, exacted from the new bishop an oath of subjection to the papal authority, conceived in the strongest terms; a circumstance, remarkably proving both the ambition of Gregory and the superstition of the times. Boniface armed with letters from the pope, and, what was far better, encouraged by the addition of fresh labourers from England, returned to the scenes of his mission.—Coming into Hesse, he confirmed, by imposition of hands, several * who had already been baptized, and exerted himself with much zeal against the idolatrous superstitions of the Germans. An oak of prodigious size had been an instrument of much pagan delusion: his sincerest converts advised him to cut it down; and he followed their counsel. It ought to be observed, that the famous Charles Martel protected him with his civil authority; for the dominion of the French extended a considerable way

* Fleury, B. XLI. 44, &c.

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into Germany. It does not appear, however, that Boniface made any other use of this circumstance, than what the most conscientious ecclesiastic may do, wherever the Christian religion is established by the laws.

The advice of Boniface. A. D. 723.

Daniel, bishop of Winchester, about the year 723, wrote to Boniface concerning the best method of dealing with idolaters. "Do not contradict," says he, "in a direct manner their accounts of the genealogy of their gods; allow that they were born from one another in the same way as mankind are; this concession will give you the advantage of proving, that there was a time when they had no existence.—Ask them, who governed the world before the birth of their gods—ask them, if these gods have ceased to propagate. If they have not, show them the consequence; namely, that the gods must be infinite in number, and that no man can rationally be at ease in worshipping any of them, lest he should, by that means, offend one, who is more powerful.—Argue thus with them, not in the way of insult, but with temper and moderation; and take opportunities to contrast these absurdities with the Christian doctrine: let the pagans be rather ashamed than incensed by your oblique mode of stating these subjects.—Show them the insufficiency of their plea of antiquity: inform them that idolatry did anciently prevail over the world, but that Jesus Christ was manifested, in order to reconcile men to God by his grace."—Piety and good sense appear to have predominated in these instructions, and we have here proofs, in addition to those already given, of the grace of God conferred on our ancestors during the heptarchy.

Boniface preserved a correspondence with other friends in England, as well as with Daniel. From his native country he was supplied also, as we have seen, with fellow-labourers. In Thuringia he confirmed the churches, delivered them from heresies,

and false brethren, and the work still prospered in his hand. CENT. VIII.

In the mean time, like all upright and conscientious men, he found himself often involved in difficulties, and doubted in what manner he should regulate his conduct in regard to scandalous priests, who greatly obstructed his mission. He laid his doubts before his old friend the bishop of Winchester*. Should he avoid all communication with them, he might offend the court of France, without whose civil protection he could not proceed in his mission. Should he preserve connexion with them, he was afraid of bringing guilt upon his conscience. Daniel advises him to endure, with patience, what he could not amend: he counsels him not to make a schism in the Church, under pretence of purging it; and, at the same time, exhorts him to exercise church-discipline on notorious offenders.

Boniface desired Daniel also to send him the book of the prophets, "which," says he, "the abbot Winbert, formerly my master, left at his death, written in very distinct characters. A greater consolation in my old age I cannot receive; for I can find no book like it in this country; and, as my sight grows weak, I cannot easily distinguish the small letters, which are joined close together in the sacred volumes which are at present in my possession." Do these things seem to belong to the character of an ambitious and insidious ecclesiastic, or to that of a simple and upright servant of Jesus Christ?

The reputation of this Saint,—such I shall venture to call him, from the evidence of facts,—was spread through the greatest part of Europe; and many from England poured into Germany to connect themselves with him. These dispersed themselves in the country, and preached in the villages of Hesse and Thuringia.

* Bonif. Ep. 3. Fleury, B. XLI. toward the end.

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In 732, Boniface received the title of archbishop *, from Gregory III. who supported his mission with the same spirit, with which Gregory II. had done. Encouraged by a letter sent to him from Rome, he proceeded to erect new churches, and to extend the profession of the Gospel. At this time, he found the Bavarian churches disturbed by an heretic, called Eremvolf, who would have seduced the people into idolatry. Boniface condemned him, according to the canons, freed the country from his devices, and restored the discipline of the Church.

Boniface made an archbishop. A. D. 732.

About the year 732, Burchard and Lullus were invited from England by Boniface, who made the former bishop of Wurtzburg, where Kilian had preached, and suffered martyrdom, about fifty years before. He was abundantly successful during the labours of ten years, by which his strength was exhausted: he gave up his bishopric in 752, and died soon after. Butler, Vol. X.

Curious letter of Boniface to the archbishop of Canterbury.

Some time after, Boniface wrote to Northelme, archbishop of Canterbury, in a strain, which equally shows the charity and sincerity of his spirit, and the superstition of the times †. In 738, he again visited Rome, being far advanced in life; and, after some stay, he induced several Englishmen, who resided there, to join with him in his German mission.—Returning into Bavaria, by the desire of duke Odilo, he restored the purity of the faith, and prevailed against the artifices of some seducers, who had done much mischief both by false doctrine and flagitious example. He established three new bishoprics in the country, at Saltzburg, Frisinghen, and Ratisbon. That of Passaw had been fixed before. It must, however, be observed, that the successes and conquests of the Carlovingian princes much facilitated his labours in Germany.

Visits Rome. A. D. 738.

In writing to Cuthbert, archbishop of Canter-

* Boniface was the first archbishop of Mentz.

† Ep. B. V. See Fleury, XLII. 22.

bury*, after testifying his zealous adherence to the See of Rome, and his submission to its authority, he exhorts him to discharge his duty faithfully, notwithstanding the difficulties to which good pastors were exposed. "Let us fight," says he, "for the Lord: for we live in days of affliction and anguish. Let us die, if God so please, for the laws of our fathers, that with them we may obtain the heavenly inheritance. Let us not be as dumb dogs, sleepy watchmen, or selfish hirelings, but as careful and vigilant pastors, preaching to all ranks, as far as God shall enable us, in season and out of season, as Gregory writes in his pastoral." CENT. VIII.

Adalbert†, a Frenchman, a proud enthusiast, and Clement, a Scotchman, pretended that Christ, by his descent into hell, delivered the souls of the damned. The former was deceived by the most absurd and extravagant delusions, and the latter was infamous in life and conversation. Gevilieb also, a German bishop, who associated with them, had actually committed murder; but so ignorant and depraved were the rulers of the German Christians, that he was still allowed to continue a bishop without infamy. Boniface, who saw the evil of these things more deeply than others, desired that Adalbert and Clement might be imprisoned by the authority of duke Carloman, and be secluded from society, that they might not corrupt others by their poisonous sentiments, and that Gevilieb might be deposed from his bishopric. He gained his point in the condemnation and imprisonment of the two former, and in the deposition of the latter. He, who has no charity for souls, and no prospects beyond those of this life, may harshly condemn the missionary; but every serious and candid mind will applaud the sincerity and uprightness of his inten-

* Bonif. Ep. 105. Fleury, XLII. 37.
† Butler's Lives, Boniface. Fleury, XLII. 52.

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tions, and will wish for the exercise of discipline, though in a manner somewhat irregular, provided substantial justice be done, rather than that men should be allowed to corrupt their fellow-creatures, without mercy and without control. Of the guilt of those three men, there is abundance of evidence.

Boniface, at length, was fixed at Mentz, and he is commonly called archbishop of that city. The increase of his dignity does not, however, seem to have diminished his zeal and laboriousness. His connexion with England was constantly preserved; and, it is in the epistolary correspondence with his own country, that the most striking evidence of his pious views appears. In one of his epistles *, he mentions his sufferings from pagans, false Christians, and immoral pastors: he feels, as a man, these hardships, but intimates his desire of the honour of dying for the love of Him, who died for us. He often begged for books from England, especially those of Bede, whom he styles the lamp of the Church. He wrote also a circular letter to the bishops and people of England, entreating their prayers for the success of his missions.

Many persons, while in obscure life, have professed much zeal for the service of God, but have declined in earnestness, as they advanced in years, particularly if they acquired honour and dignity in the world. This was not the case with Boniface. Though oppressed with age and infirmities, and greatly revered in the whole Christian world, he determined to return into Friezeland. Before his departure, he acted in all things as if he had a strong presentiment of what was to happen. He appointed Lullus, an Englishman, his successor, as archbishop of Mentz, and wrote to the abbot of St. Denys, desiring him to acquaint the king, Pepin, that he and his friends believed he had not long to

* 16 Ep. Alban Butler.

live. He begged, that the king would show kindness to the missionaries whom he should leave behind him. "Some* of them," said he, "are priests dispersed into divers parts, for the good of the Church: others are monks, settled in small monasteries, where they instruct the children. There are aged men with me, who have long assisted me in my labours. I fear, lest after my death, they should be dispersed, and the disciples, who are near the pagan frontiers, should lose the faith of Jesus Christ. I beg that my son Lullus may be confirmed in the episcopal office, and that he may teach the priests, the monks, and the people. I hope that he will perform these duties. That, which most afflicts me, is, that the priests, who are on the pagan frontiers, are very indigent. They can obtain bread, but no clothes, unless they be assisted, as they have been by me. Let me know your answer, that I may live or die with more cheerfulness." CENT. VIII.

It is most probable that he received an answer agreeable to his benevolent spirit, as, before his departure, he ordained Lullus his successor, with the consent of king Pepin†. He went by the Rhine into Friezeland, where, assisted by Eoban, whom he had ordained bishop of Utrecht, after the death of Willibrod, he brought great numbers of pagans within the pale of the Church. He had appointed a day to confirm those whom he had baptized. In waiting for them he encamped with his followers on the banks of the Bordne, a river which then divided East and West Friezeland. His intention was to confirm, by imposition of hands, the converts in the plains of Dockum. On the appointed day, he beheld, in the morning, not the new converts, whom he expected, but a troop of angry pagans, armed with shields and lances. The servants

* Ep. 92. † Fleury, XLII. 20.

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went out to resist, but Boniface, with calm intrepidity, said to his followers, "Children, forbear to fight; the Scripture forbids us to render evil for evil. The day, which I have long waited for, is come; hope in God, and he will save your souls." Thus did he prepare the priests and the rest of his companions for martyrdom. The pagans attacked them furiously, and slew the whole company, fifty-two in number, besides Boniface himself. This happened in the year 755, in the fortieth year after his arrival in Germany, and in the 75th of his age. The manner in which his death was resented by the Christian Germans, shows the high veneration in which he was held through the country, and sufficiently confutes the notion, which some have held, of his imperious and fraudulent conduct. They collected a great army, attacked the pagans, slew many of them, pillaged their country, and carried off their wives and children. Those, who remained pagans in Friezeland, were glad to obtain peace by submitting to Christian rites. Such a method of showing regard for Boniface, might be expected from a rude and ill-informed multitude. But, rude as they were, they had the gift of common sense, and could judge whether the Apostle of the Germans was their sincere friend or not; and their judgment is with me decisive.

Boniface killed. A. D. 755.

A collection of Boniface's letters has been preserved, some of which have already been mentioned. That the reformation of the clergy, and the conversion of infidels, were the objects of his zeal, appears from his literary correspondence, no less than from the whole tenour of his life*. In the first letter to Nithardus, in which he takes the name of Winfrid, he exhorts him to contemn the things of time and sense, and to devote himself to the study of the Scriptures, which he recommends as

* Du Pin. 8th Cent. Bonif.

the highest wisdom. "Nothing," says he, "can you search after more honourably in youth, or enjoy more comfortably in old age, than the knowledge of holy Scripture." CENT. VIII.

In another letter, he exhorts the priest Herefrede, in his own name, and in that of eight bishops, who were with him, to show the memoir, which they sent him, to the king of the Mercians. The purport of it was to implore that prince to check the debaucheries and disorders of his kingdom.

Excessively attached as he was, both to the Roman See and to monastic institutions, he knew how to subdue these attachments, and make them obedient to a stronger passion, viz. for genuine piety and virtue. He wrote to Cuthbert, archbishop of Canterbury, desiring him to restrain the women of England from going in such numbers to Rome: "the greatest part of them," says he, "live in lewdness, and scandalize the Church; as there is scarcely a city in Lombardy and France, where there are not some English women of flagitious life and manners."

That association of ideas, which Mr. Locke describes, and which has been in all ages a powerful source of error and absurdity, both in principles and practice, accounts for the acrimonious expressions with which Protestant writers have too often indulged themselves in the relation of matters connected with the See of Rome.—The Magdeburgensian Centuriators seem, by their treatment of the character of Boniface, to have largely imbibed this prejudice. I was surprised to find them giving sanction to the account of an old Chronicle*, which describes Boniface as raising soldiers to invade the Thuringians, absolving them from the payment of taxes to their civil governors, and justifying this extraordinary conduct by the recital of a divine vision. The manners of the eighth century certainly did not

* Cent. 8th. De propagatione Ecclesiæ, De Bonifacio.

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allow such an union of the military and sacerdotal character: moreover, the circumstances of Boniface's proceedings, as attested by history, and, above all, the unquestionable memorials of his evangelical labours, forbid me to entertain such sentiments of the Apostle of Germany. If he had had soldiers at his devotion, he surely might have avoided those hardships which he endured, and have prevented the murder of himself, and of his companions in the plains of Dockum. The account seems to have been forged, in order to justify the conduct of military prelates, and of papal tyranny in after-ages. The censures also, which Boniface passed upon Adalbert and Clement, seem to have been arraigned by the Centuriators, without foundation. It looks like an instance of great partiality to call such men "good persons," who were convicted of scandalous wickedness. But it would be tedious to particularize the charges which these writers have formed against Boniface, supported chiefly by mere suspicions and conjectures.

That Mosheim should inveigh against this missionary, is what might be expected from his prejudices. But he should have written with consistency. He speaks of the pious labours of Boniface, of his finishing with glory the task he had undertaken, and of the assistance which he received from a number of pious men, who repaired to him from England and France*. "His piety," he adds, "was ill rewarded by that barbarous people by whom he was murdered. If we consider the eminent services he rendered to Christianity, the honourable title of the Apostle of the Germans will appear to have been not undeservedly bestowed." Who could imagine that this pious pastor should, by the same writer, be accused, without warrant, of often "employing violence and terror, and sometimes artifice and

* Mosheim, Cent. VIII.

fraud, in order to multiply the number of Christians. He ascribes to him also "an imperious and arrogant temper, and a cunning and insidious turn of mind." CENT. VIII.

Which of these two accounts shall we believe? for, it is as equally impossible that both should be true, as that piety should be consistent with a spirit of violence, arrogance, and fraud. But, it is thus, that men zealous to propagate divine truth in the earth, are often described by those, who arrogate to themselves the whole praise of judgment and candour. There has seldom existed an eminent and useful missionary, who has not, in this way, been aspersed. In the mean time, I am sensible, that the foundation of the strong prejudices against Boniface, is his attachment to the Roman See. I cannot observe, however, that he either practised idolatry, or taught false doctrine. Removed from the scene of controversy, he seems to have taken no part in the debate concerning images: he was ever invariable in opposing idolatry and immorality: he lived amidst many dangers and sufferings; and he appears to have supported, for many years, an uniform tenour of zeal, to which he sacrificed all worldly conveniencies, and, in fine, to have finished his course in martyrdom, and in the patience and meekness of a disciple of Christ. I shall leave it to the reader's judgment, what estimate ought to be formed of him, after having observed, that God made large use of his labours by extending, in the north of Europe, the bounds of the Church, at the same time that they were so much contracted in Asia and Africa. Character of Boniface.

Winebald, the son of a royal English Saxon, shared with Boniface in his labours in Germany; his life was preserved, though in imminent danger from idolaters, and God blessed his work among the heathen: he died in 760. Winebald dies. A. D. 760.

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In Friezeland, the Church of Utrecht was governed by Gregory, who from the fifteenth year of his age, had been a follower of Boniface. Two of his brothers having been murdered in a wood, the barons, whose vassals they were, delivered the murderers bound into his hands. Gregory, after he had treated them kindly, bad them depart in peace, saying, sin no more, lest a worse thing befal you. He was assisted in his ministerial labours by several disciples of various nations; some were of his own nation, the French, others were English, Frisons, newly-converted Saxons, and Bavarians. Scarcely a day passed, but early in the morning he gave them spiritual instruction. This man affected no singularity either in habit or in diet. That he was not carried away by the torrent of popular superstition, is a strong proof either of great understanding, or of eminent piety, or of both. But he recommended sobriety among his disciples; was not to be moved from the path of duty by slander, and was boundless in his liberality to the poor. He died about the year 776.

Gregory of Utrecht, an excellent character, dies.

A. D. 776.

Liefuvyn an Englishman, one of his disciples, was distinguished by his labours among the missionaries of Germany. He ventured even to appear before the assembly of the Saxons held upon the Weser; and, while they were sacrificing to their idols, he exhorted them with a loud voice to turn from those vanities to the living God. As an ambassador from Jehovah, he offered them promises of salvation. And here his zeal seemed likely to have cost him his life; but he was at length suffered to depart, on the remonstrances * of Buto, one of their chiefs, who expostulated with them on the unreasonableness of treating an ambassador of the great God with less respect than they did one from any of the neigh-

* Fleury, XLIV. 11.

bouring nations *. In the mean time, the arms of Charlemagne prevailed over the Saxons, and eventually, at least, facilitated the labours of Liefuvyn, who continued to preach among this people till his death. CENT. VIII.

Willehad, an English priest, born in Northumberland, was abundantly successful in the conversion of the Saxons. It is true, that he taught under the protection and auspices of Charlemagne. But, whatever may be thought of the motives of the latter, the views of the missionary might be, and probably were, upright and spiritual. Certainly he underwent great hazards †, overcame the ferocious spirits of the infidels by his meekness, and spread among them the knowledge of the Gospel. A persecution drove him once out of the country; but, by the power of the emperor, he again returned and prosecuted his labours. After various contests, the Saxons were obliged to submit to Charlemagne, and to become nominal Christians in general. But, that this was universally the case, or even nearly so,

* Buto seems, in part at least, to have felt the power of the divine word commending itself to his conscience in the sight of God; and to have reported that God was of a truth with real Christian pastors, 1 Cor. xiv. 25. Effects of the kind, mentioned by the Apostle, have, in all ages, been very common, wherever the real Gospel is plainly and faithfully delivered. The message from God convinces and overawes the serious hearer, and, by its internal excellence, makes itself a way into the conscience. If Liefuvyn had preached mere morals, I should no more have expected such consequences from his harangues, than from the lectures of the Greek philosophers.

† Once when he was in danger of being put to death by the pagan Frisons, some of them, struck with his innocence and probity, and doubting whether the religion which he preached might not be divine, said, "Let us cast lots whether we shall put him to death, or dismiss him." It was done so, and the lot decided in his favour. Fleury, XLV. 15. The custom of deciding cases of this nature by lot, was remarkably German. The classical reader may recollect a similar instance in Cæsar's Comm. toward the end of Lib. 1. De Bell. Gall.

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the pious labours of a number of missionaries render very improbable.

Death of Villehad in Friezeland.

Villehad was bishop of Bremen, and was called the Apostle of Saxony. He had begun his mission in Dockum, where Boniface was murdered. He was the first missionary who passed the Elbe. His attention to the Scriptures appears from his copying the epistles of St. Paul. He died in Friezeland, after he had laboured 35 years, and had been bishop of Bremen upwards of two years. To his weeping friends, he said in his dying moments, "Withhold me not from going to God: these sheep I recommend to Him, who intrusted them to me, and whose mercy is able to protect them." See Alban Butler, Vol. XI.

This was an age of missionaries: their character and their success form, indeed, almost the only shining picture in this century. Firmin, a Frenchman, preached the Gospel, under various difficulties*, in Alsace, Bavaria, and Switzerland, and inspected a number of monasteries. After all, the arms of Charlemagne contributed more than any thing else to the external reception of Christianity; and Alcuin, his favourite, laments, that more pains were taken to exact from the Saxons the payment of tithes, than to inform them of the nature of true religion. Teachers who were merely secular, drenched in the vices of human nature and of the times, would doubtless act in this manner. But I have attempted, from very confused and imperfect memoirs, to present to the reader, those, who in the north of Europe were indeed sent of God, and laboured in demonstration of the Spirit.

Rumold, a Missionary in Lower Germany, murdered. A. D. 775.

Rumold, a native either of England or of Ireland, should be added to the list. He travelled into Lower Germany, went into Brabant, diffused much light in the neighbourhood of Mechlin, and was made an itinerant episcopal missionary. In 775,

* Mosh. Cent. VIII.

he was murdered by two persons, one of whom he had reproved for adultery*. CENT. VIII.

Silvin, of Auchy, born in Toulouse †, was first a courtier, then a religious person, and afterwards appointed bishop among the infidels. His labours were, chiefly, in Terouanne, the north of France, which was, in this century, full of pagans and merely nominal Christians. He gathered in a large harvest, having preached for many years. He died at Auchy, in the county of Artois.

Virgilius, an Irishman, was appointed bishop of Saltzburgh, by king Pepin. During two years, his modesty prevented him from entering upon the office; but he was at length prevailed upon to receive consecration. He followed the steps of Boniface in rooting out the remains of idolatry in his diocese, and died in the year 780 ‡. Virgilius dies. A. D. 780.

* A. Butler, Vol. VII. † See Alban Butler's Lives of Saints.

‡ A misunderstanding had once taken place between this missionary and Boniface. The latter accused him to the See of Rome, of teaching, "that there was another world, and other men under the earth, or another sun and moon." Bonif. Ep. 10. To the pious spirit of Boniface a difficulty of solving the question arose, on this view of the tenets of Virgilius, how such ideas were compatible with the Mosaic account of the origin of all mankind from Adam, and of the redemption of the whole species by Jesus Christ. After all, it appears that Boniface was mistaken, and that Virgilius being better acquainted with the true figure of the earth, than most of his contemporaries in that ignorant age, only held the opinion of the Antipodes, a notion as sound in philosophy, as it is innocent in regard to Christianity. As Virgilius was afterwards made bishop of Saltzburgh, he continued to labour in the same cause with Boniface, and to tread in his steps. It is more than probable, that both Boniface and the pope were satisfied of his soundness in the faith, and dismissed the accusation. It seemed worth while to state this matter in a true light, from the evidence of Boniface's letter. It appears, that Virgilius was not condemned for holding the doctrine of the Antipodes, and that the charge of Bower, against Boniface, is as malicious as it is ill-founded. See hist. of the popes (Zachary) —where the historian, without warrant, accuses Boniface of bearing a secret grudge to Virgilius, and of being actuated by a spirit of revenge.

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AUTHORS OF THIS CENTURY.

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THE most learned writer of this century, if we may except our countryman Bede, seems to have been John of Damascus. He was one of the first, who mingled the Aristotelian or Peripatetic philosophy with the Christian religion*. This philosophy was gradually supplanting the authority of the Platonic. It makes no part of my subject, to explain the difference of the systems of Plato and Aristotle. Suffice it to say, that they were both very foreign to Christianity, and each, in their turn, corrupted it extremely. John was a voluminous writer, and became, among the Greeks, what Thomas Aquinas afterwards was among the Latins. He seems to have defended the system, commonly called the Arminian notion of free-will, in opposition to the doctrine of effectual grace. This† was a natural consequence of his philosophizing spirit. For, all the philosophers of antiquity, amidst their endless discordancies, agreed in teaching man to rely altogether on himself. This is the dangerous philosophy, which St. Paul warns us to beware of. It hitherto wore, chiefly, the garb of Plato: it was now assuming that of Aristotle. In both these dresses, it was still "the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God." And even at this day, among all who lean to their own understanding, to the disparagement of revelation, its nature is the same, however varnished with the polish of Christian phraseology.

In the doctrine of the Trinity, John appears to have been orthodox: in other respects, he was one of the most powerful supporters of error. He was

* Fleur. XLII. 44.

† Du Pin, 8th Cent. John of Damascus.

an advocate for the practice of praying for the dead, which he regarded as effectual for the remission of sins. This was a deplorable article of superstition, which had been growing in the Church, and wanted the sanction of a genius like that of John to give it lasting celebrity. I can find no evidences of his real knowledge or practice of godliness. And the reader will think he has been detained sufficiently by this Grecian author, after he has learned, that his eloquent and learned pen defended the detestable doctrine of image-worship, and contributed more than that of any other author, to establish the practice of it in the east. In the mean time there arose no evangelical luminary, who might combat his arguments with sufficient ability. The Scripture itself, indeed, was more than half buried under the load of superstitions. The learning of this eastern father, was probably more accurate and refined than that of Bede. In the latter, however, we have seen the fullest evidence of Christian light and humility: in the former, as far as respects true wisdom, all is dark and dreary; and the baleful influence of his unscriptural opinions, however respectable he might be in a literary view, has seldom been exceeded by that of any other writer in the history of the Church.

I have already taken notice of the opposition made in the west, to the progress of image-worship, by the authority of Charlemagne. The Carolin books, published in his name, were powerful checks against the growing evil; and it is more probable, that such a prince as Charlemagne was carried along by the current of the times, than that he directed the sentiments of the western Churches by his own theological studies. Political and secular reasons unhappily retained these Churches in the Roman communion, and, in process of time, the abominations of idolatry overspread them all. It is, however, a pleasing circumstance, that the labours of

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missionaries in the north of Europe, which form the most shining part of Christian history in this century, were all conducted by Christians of the west, and particularly by those who were the most remote from idolatry, those of our own country especially. There is, therefore, good reason to believe, that the new Churches in the north were taught to worship the living God, through the one Mediator Christ. For the British Churches expressed the most marked detestation of the second council of Nice *. And Alcuin, the preceptor of Charlemagne, disproved its decrees in a letter, by express authorities of Scripture. It is too true, that our ancestors, like the rest of Europe, learned at length to worship idols. For religious movements among churches are generally retrograde. Entirely distinct from human institutions of science, Christian views are most perfect at first, as being derived from the divine word, and impressed on the hearts of man by divine grace: the wisdom of this world, aided by the natural propensities of mankind, corrupts them afterwards by degrees, and too often leaves them, at length, neither root nor branch of evangelical light and purity.

Alcuin, an Englishman, goes as ambassador to France. A. D. 790.

Alcuin, who has been just mentioned, was born in England†; and was a deacon of the Church of York. He was sent ambassador into France by Offa, king of the Mercians, in the year 790. On this occasion he gained the esteem of Charlemagne, and persuaded that monarch to found the universities of Paris and Pavia. He was looked upon as one of the wisest and most learned men of his time. He read public lectures in the emperor's palace, and in other places. He wrote, in an orthodox manner, on the Trinity, and, in particular, confuted the notions of Felix, bishop of Urgel, of whom it is sufficient to say, that he revived something like the

* Collier's Eccl. Hist. B. 2. † Du Pin.

Nestorian heresy, by separating the humanity from the divinity of the son of God. Alcuin showed himself a master of his subject, and wrote in a candid and moderate spirit. He died in 804. CENT. VIII. Dies, A. D. 804.

Even Italy itself was not disposed altogether to obey the pope, in regard to image-worship. Some Italian bishops assisted at the council of Frankfort, before mentioned; and Paulinus, of Aquileia, bore a distinguished part in it. This prelate wrote, also, against the error of Felix, and seems to have been one of the best bishops of his time. Let us try, from the scanty materials before us, if we can collect his views and spirit on subjects peculiarly Christian.

Firmness of Paulinus at the Second Council of Nice.

This bishop successfully opposed the error of Felix, concerning the person of Jesus Christ, and wrote a book of wholesome instructions, which, for a long time was supposed to be the work of Augustine*. It is remarkable, that he and some other Italian bishops, in the year 787†, agreed to condemn the decrees of the second council of Nice, as idolatrous, though pope Adrian had assisted at that council by his legates, and used his utmost endeavours to maintain its authority. In the council of Frankfort also, the presence of two papal legates hindered not the firm agreement of Paulinus and other Italian bishops, with the decrees of the said council. These are clear proofs, that the despotism of Antichrist was, as yet, so far from being universal, that it was not owned throughout Italy itself; and, that in some parts of that country, as well as in England and France, the purity of Christian worship was still maintained. The city of Rome, indeed, and its environs, seem to have been, at this period, the most corrupt part of Christendom in Europe, nor do I remember a single missionary in these times to have been an Italian.

Paulinus, in his book against Felix, affirms, that

* Du Pin.

† See Dr. Allix, on the ancient Churches of Piedmont.

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the Eucharist is a morsel and bit of bread*. He maintains, that it is spiritual life or death in the eater, as he either has faith or hath not; which seems to be a just and evangelical view of that divine ordinance, not only free from the absurdity of transubstantiation, but also expressive of the Christian article of justification, of which the reader hears very little in these cloudy times. Still more express testimonies to the essentials of salvation are not wanting in this author. He protests, that the blood of those, who have themselves been redeemed, cannot blot out the least sin; that the expiation of iniquity is the exclusive privilege of the blood of Christ alone. He† defines the properties of the divine and human nature, as united in the person of Jesus Christ, with great precision; and so careful is he to describe the latter as circumscribed and limited by the bounds of body, as to form, at least a strong consequential argument against the notion of transubstantiation. Hear how he comments on our Lord's well-known description of eating his flesh and drinking his blood in the 6th chap. of St. John's Gospel. "The flesh and blood is to be referred to his human, not to his divine, nature.—Yet if he were not the true God, his flesh and blood could by no means give eternal life to those who feed upon him. Whence also John says, the blood of his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Hear also how he speaks of the intercession of Christ. "Paul is not a mediator; he is an ambassador for Christ. The advocate is He, who being also the Redeemer, exhibits to God the Father the human nature in the unity of the person of God and man. John intercedes not, but declares that this mediator is the propitiation for our sins." Once more: "The Son of God Almighty, our Almighty Lord, because He redeemed us with the price of his blood, is justly

* Buccella et particula panis, in his dedication to Charlemagne.

† Allix.

called the true Redeemer, by the confession of all, who are redeemed. He himself was not redeemed; He had never been captive: we have been redeemed, because we were captives, sold under sin*, bound by the hand-writing which was against us, which He took away, nailing it to his cross, blotting it out by his blood, triumphing openly over it in himself, having finished a work which the blood of no other Redeemer could do†." Such is the language of this evangelical bishop, while he is opposing the Nestorian heresy revived by Felix. And here, at least, we see a due respect paid to Holy Scripture. Paulinus quotes, understands, and builds his faith upon it; and is equally remote from dependence on mere human reasonings, on the authority of the Church of Rome, or on any traditions. CENT. VIII.

This bishop was born about the year 726, near Friuli, was promoted to Aquileia in 776, was highly favoured by Charlemagne, and preached the Gospel to the pagans of Carinthia and Stiria, and to the Avaras, a nation of Huns. One of his maxims was, "Pride is that, without which no sin is or will be committed: it is the beginning, the end, and the cause of all sin." I wonder not, that he, who in an age of dulness could see the nature of sin with so penetrating an eye was confounded with the bishop of Hippo. He died in 804‡. In a letter to Charlemagne, he complained of the want of residence in bishops, and of their attending the court. He cites a canon of the council of Sardica, in the fourth century, which forbade the absence of bishops from their dioceses, for a longer space than three weeks. Brief account of Paulinus. He dies. A. D. 804.

* Rom. vii. † Coloss. ii.

‡ I have been obliged to Alban Butler for some of the foregoing particulars. But it is remarkable that he omits his testimony against image-worship. The reader should remember that Butler is a zealous Roman Catholic.

CENTURY IX.

CHAP. I.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE STATE OF RELIGION IN THIS CENTURY.

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WE are penetrating into the regions of darkness, and a "land of deserts and pits, a land of drought, and of the shadow of death*;" and are carried, by every step, into scenes still more gloomy than the former. Here and there, indeed, a glimmering ray of the Sun of righteousness appears; but it is in vain to look for any steady lustre of evangelical truth and holiness. In such a situation, to pursue the chronological course of events, would be as tedious as it is unprofitable. The plan of history for each century should be modified by the existing circumstances. And there seem to be four distinct phenomena of Christian light in this period, which deserve to be illustrated in so many chapters: namely, in the 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th.—It shall be the business of this first chapter, to premise some general observations, which may enable the reader more clearly to understand those phenomena.

Several circumstances attended the thick darkness, which pervaded this century: and they appear to be reducible to the following heads:—the preference given to human writings above the Scriptures,—the

* Jerem. ii. 6.

domination of the popedom,—the accumulation of ceremonies,—and the oppression of the godly*. CENT. IX.

It was now fashionable to explain Scripture entirely by the writings of the fathers. No man was permitted, with impunity, to vary in the least from their decisions. The great apostolical rule of interpretation, namely, to compare spiritual things with spiritual†, was in a manner lost. It was deemed sufficient that such a renowned doctor had given such an interpretation. Hence, men of learning and industry paid more attention to the fathers, than to the sacred volume, which, through long disuse and neglect, was looked on as obscure and perplexed, and quite unfit for popular reading. Even divine truths seemed to derive their authority more from the word of man than of God; and the writings and decrees of men were no longer treated as witnesses, but usurped the office of judges of divine truth.

The popedom also grew stronger and stronger. Ignorance and superstition were so predominant, that whoever dared to oppose the bishop of Rome, drew upon himself a host of enemies. All, who looked for advancement in the Church, attached themselves to Antichrist. It is in this way only, that I can account for the very little resistance made to image-worship. We have seen, how a large part of the west rejected it. But most persons contented themselves with a simple exposition of their creed. Idolatry, in the mean time, was practically supported by the whole power and influence of the popedom.

The great accumulation of ceremonies, the observance of which was looked upon as absolutely necessary to salvation, drew off the attention of

* Centuriat. See their preface to the 9th century. I have availed myself of some of the thoughts; the whole is ingenious and spirited.

† 1 Cor. ii.

CHAP. I.

men from Christian piety. The all-important article of justification was nearly smothered in the rubbish: and pastors were so much taken up with externals, that they were almost entirely diverted from intellectual improvement.

Men of eminence, both in church and state, partly through superstition, and partly through secular views, suppressed in the bud every attempt to inform mankind. There were, however, a few, who groaned under these evils, and worshipped God in spirit and truth.

In Asia, Mahometanism still reigned; and, the case of the Paulicians excepted*, scarcely a vestige of real godliness appeared in the eastern Church, though we ought not to doubt but the Lord had HIS SECRET ONES. Image-worship was still a subject of debate: but, at length, under the superstitious empress Theodora, it effectually triumphed in the east. There was not an emperor or bishop of Constantinople, in all this period, who seems to have deserved particular notice on account of vital Christian knowledge, or practical piety†. The same judgment may be formed of the Roman popes.

Tenets of transubstantiation.

In this dark season, Pascasius Radbert introduced the absurd tenet of transubstantiation, which was opposed by John Scotus Erigena, and Rabanus, archbishop of Mentz, two of the most learned men of that age. But their learning seems to have had little connection with godliness, however they might successfully plead the cause of common sense in the controversy just mentioned. For, they joined in opposing the doctrine of grace, concerning which a controversy of some importance was raised in this century‡.

* See Chap. II.

† I say vital; for I am aware that Photius, bishop of Constantinople flourished in this century; a person equally infamous for hypocrisy and ambition, and renowned for genius and ecclesiastical learning. What melancholy instances of contradiction does the history of mankind afford!

‡ See Chap. IV.

In France, the views of divine grace, revived by Augustine, were more and more darkened; and we shall presently find, that a zealous advocate for them could not be heard with candour. Ado, archbishop of Vienne, was, however, an eminent exception to this account. He was indefatigable in pressing the great truths of salvation. He usually began his sermons with these, or the like words: "Hear the eternal truth, which speaks to you in the Gospel;" or, "hear Jesus Christ, who saith to you." He took particular care of the examination of candidates for orders; and was a very diligent disciplinarian. He permitted none, who were ignorant of Christian principles, to be sponsors to the baptized, or to be joined in matrimony, or to be admitted to the Lord's supper, till they were better instructed. He was inflexibly vigilant against vice; and, while his own example was an honour to his profession, he enjoined his clergy to apprize him, if they should discover any slip in his conduct. Nor did king Lothaire find him obsequious to his lusts; for through Ado's vigorous remonstrances, he was obliged to desist from a design of divorcing his queen. He sympathized, however, with sincere penitents, and was a real friend to the poor, both in a spiritual and temporal sense; and was the founder of many hospitals for their reception*. CENT. IX.

In England, the decline of godliness was grievous†, and as‡ Huntingdom remarks, Divine Providence punished the Saxons by the invasion of the Danes, the most lawless and the most savage of all

* Alban Butler, XII.

† There is reason, however, to believe, that a devotional, and, probably, an evangelical spirit prevailed in some parts of the British isles. For monks, in Ireland and Scotland, who gave themselves to prayer, preaching, and teaching in the middle ages, were called Culdees: that is, Cultores Dei. They were first known in this century by that name, at St. Andrew's particularly; but were never settled in England, except at St. Peter's in York. A. Butler, Vol. V.

‡ Collier's Ecc. Hist.

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mortals. The great Alfred was indeed raised up to defend his country against them. And, one of his speeches, delivered to the soldiers, before a battle, displays, at once, much good sense and a spirit of religion. He told his people, that their sins had given their enemies the advantage: that they ought to reform their own manners, in order to engage the favour of God on their side; that in other respects they had the superiority, Christians were fighting against heathens, and honest men against robbers: that theirs was not a war of ambition or conquest, but of necessary self-defence. In the battle which followed, he entirely defeated the Danes.

In * the preface to Gregory's Pastoral, a book translated into English, by this prince, for the benefit of his subjects, he observes, that when he came to the Crown, there were very few, south of the Humber†, who understood the common prayers in English, or, who could translate a passage of Latin into the language of their own country. He sent copies of Gregory's Pastoral into every diocese, for the benefit of the clergy: with the same beneficent design, he translated also Bede's ecclesiastical history: he himself constantly attended public worship; and, from his youth, he was wont to pray for grace, and to use serious methods to subdue his passions. Through life he seems to have maintained a beautiful consistency of character. He endeavoured to promote the knowledge of the English tongue among all persons of tolerable rank; and expressed his opinion, that those, who meant to attain eminence in the state, should also know the Latin language. It is pleasant to see the ebullitions of genius and of strong sense in an iron age, like this before us. Alfred

* Alfred invited John Scotus, not the famous John Scotus Erigena, from Old Saxony into England; and founded the University of Oxford. That of Cambridge was of a date somewhat later.

† Collier, Vol. I. B. 3d.

would, doubtless, in more auspicious times, have appeared among the first of mankind. There seems no reason to doubt the sincerity of his piety. A religious spirit had this advantage in a rude age, that it was not thought to reflect disgrace on the powers of the understanding. But, this glorious sun, after it had shone a little time through an atmosphere enveloped with vapours, and had in some degree dispersed them, was not able to illumine the region in which it appeared: The mist prevailed again, and England was covered with darkness. CENT. IX.

Egbert made king of all England. A. D. 827.

It may be proper to remind the reader, that about the beginning of this century, Egbert became king of Wessex: that in 827, he became king of all England, near 400 years after the first arrival of the Saxons; and that Alfred was his grandson.

Death of Charlemagne. A. D. 814.

Charlemagne of France, who had flourished in the last century, died in the former part of this, aged 72, in the year 814. It is scarcely worth while to recount the SPLENDID SINS of this emperor, since his sanguinary ambition and his habitual lewdness, too plainly evince his want of Christian principle. He revived the western empire in Germany, which continues to this day. He was a great instrument of Providence, no doubt, in extending the pale of the Church; and, at the same time, he fixed the power of the popedom on the strongest foundations. His labours to revive learning were very great; but, like those of Alfred, they failed of success. His religious and moral character bears no comparison with that of the English monarch.

CHAP. II.

THE PAULICIANS.

CHAP. II.

ABOUT the year 660, a new sect arose in the east, the accounts of which are far more scanty than a

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Sect of Paulicians. A. D. 660.

writer of real Church-history would wish*. Constantine, a person who dwelt in Mananalis, an obscure town in the neighbourhood of Samosata, entertained a deacon, who, having been a prisoner among the Mahometans, had returned from captivity, and received from the same deacon, the gift of the New Testament in the original language. So early had the laity begun to think themselves excluded from the reading of the sacred volume; and the clergy, both in the east and the west, encouraged this apprehension. The growing ignorance, rendered by far the greatest part of the laity incapable of reading the Scriptures. I do not find any ecclesiastical prohibitory decree in these times, nor was there much occasion for it. But Constantine made the best use of the deacon's present. He studied the sacred oracles, and exercised his own understanding upon them. He formed to himself a plan of divinity from the New Testament; and, as St. Paul is the most systematical of all the Apostles, Constantine very properly attached himself to his writings with peculiar attention, as indeed every serious theologian must do. He will find, no doubt, the same truths interspersed through the rest of the sacred volume, and a wonderful unity of design and spirit breathing through the whole; but, as it pleased God to employ one person more learned than the rest, it is highly proper, that the student should avail him-

* Photius, B. 1. contra Manichæos, et Peter Siculus Hist. Manichæor. These are the two original sources, from which Mosheim and Gibbon have drawn their information concerning the Paulicians. Photius and Peter have not fallen into my hands; and their prejudice and passion were so great, that my reader will very probably be no great loser by the circumstance. By the assistance of the two modern authors, I shall state the few facts which are known, and give as impartial a judgment concerning the sect in question as I can. The candour of Gibbon is remarkable in this part of his history. O si sic omnia!—Mosheim Eccl. Hist. IX. Cent.—Gibbon, Vol. V. C. 54.

self of this advantage. That Constantine was in possession of the genuine text, was acknowledged universally. A remarkable circumstance! which shows the watchful providence of God over the Scriptures!—Amidst the thousand frauds and sophisms of the times, no adulteration of them was ever permitted to take place. CENT. IX.

The enemies of the Paulicians give them the name from some unknown teacher; but there seems scarcely a doubt, that they took the name from St. Paul himself. For Constantine gave himself the name of Sylvanus; his disciples were called, Titus, Timothy, Tychicus, the names of the Apostle's fellow-labourers; and the names of the Apostolic Churches were given to the congregations formed by their labours in Armenia and Cappadocia.—Their enemies called them Gnostics or Manichees; and confounded them with those antient sectaries, of whom it is probable that there were then scarcely any remains. It has been too customary to connect different and independent sects into one; and to suppose, that every new phenomenon in religion is nothing more than the revival of some former party. This is frequently the case, but not always. In the present instance, I see reason to suppose the Paulicians to have been perfect originals, in regard to any other denomination of Christians. The little, that has already been mentioned concerning them, carries entirely this appearance; and, I hope, it may shortly be evident, that they originated from a heavenly influence, teaching and converting them; and that, in them, we have one of those extraordinary effusions of the Divine Spirit, by which the knowledge of Christ and the practice of godliness is kept alive in the world.

The Paulicians are said to have rejected the two epistles of St. Peter. We know nothing of these men, but from the pens of their enemies. Their writings, and the lives of their eminent teachers, are totally lost. In this case, common justice requires us

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to suspend our belief; and, if internal evidence militate in their favour, a strong presumption is formed against the credibility of a report, raised to their disadvantage. This is the case in the present instance: for, there is nothing in St. Peter's writings that could naturally prejudice against those writings, persons who cordially received the epistles of St. Paul. There is, on the other hand, the most perfect coincidence of sentiment and spirit between the two Apostles; and, in the latter epistle of St. Peter, toward the end, there is a very remarkable testimony to the inspired character and divine wisdom of St. Paul. That this sect also despised the whole of the Old Testament, is asserted, but on grounds, which seem utterly unwarrantable. For, they are said to have done this as Gnostics and Manichees, though they steadily condemned the Manichees, and complained of the injustice which branded them with that odious name. They are also charged with holding the eternity of matter, and the existence of two independent principles; and with denying the real sufferings and real flesh of Christ. It seems no way was found so convenient to disgrace them as by the charge of Manicheism. But I cannot believe that they held these tenets; not only because they themselves denied the charge, but also because they unquestionably held things perfectly inconsistent with such notions. Is it possible, that rational creatures, men endued with common understanding, could agree to revere the writings of St. Paul, and to consider them as divinely inspired, and at the same time to condemn those of the Old Testament?

The pious, intelligent reader, who is moderately versed in Scripture, does not need to be told, that the Apostle is continually quoting the Old Testament, expounding and illustrating, and building his doctrines upon it: in short, that the New Testament is so indissolubly connected with the Old, that he, who despises the latter, cannot really, whatever he

may pretend, respect the former as divine; and that this observation holds good in regard to all the writers of the New Testament, and to St. Paul more particularly. It is allowed also, that the Paulicians held the common orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, with the confession and use of which the whole apparatus of the Manichean fable seems incompatible. Let the reader reflect only on the light in which Manicheism appeared to Augustine of Hippo, after he became acquainted with St. Paul, and he will probably form a just estimate of this whole subject. CENT. IX.

This people also were perfectly free from the image-worship, which more and more pervaded the east. They were simply scriptural in the use of the sacraments: they disregarded relics, and all the fashionable equipage of superstition; they knew no other Mediator but the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sylvanus preached with great success. Pontus and Cappadocia, regions once renowned for Christian piety, were again enlightened through his labours. He and his associates were distinguished from the clergy of that day, by their scriptural names, modest titles, zeal, knowledge, activity and holiness. Their congregations were diffused over the provinces of Asia Minor: six of the principal churches were called by the names of those to whom St. Paul addressed his epistles; and Sylvanus resided in the neighbourhood of Colonia in Pontus. Roused by the growing importance of the sect, the Greek emperors began to persecute the Paulicians with the most sanguinary severity; and, under Christian forms and names, they re-acted the scenes of Galerius and Maximin. "To their other excellent deeds," says the bigoted Peter, the Sicilian, "the divine and orthodox emperors added this virtue, that they ordered the Montanists and Manicheans * to be

* Such, I suppose, were the opprobrious names given to the Paulicians. The real Montanists had originated in the

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capitally punished; and their books, wherever found, to be committed to the flames: also, that if any person was found to have secreted them, he was to be put to death, and his goods to be confiscated." False religion, in all ages, hates the light, and supports herself by persecution, not by instruction; while the real truth, as it is in Jesus, always COMES TO THE LIGHT of Scripture, and exhibits that light plainly to the world by reading and expounding the sacred volume, whence alone she derives her authority.

Paulicians persecuted.

A Greek officer, named Simeon, armed with imperial authority, came to Colonia and apprehended Sylvanus and a number of his disciples. Stones were put into the hands of these last, and they were required to kill their pastor, as the price of their forgiveness. A person named Justus, was the only one of the number who obeyed; and he stoned to death the father of the Paulicians, who had laboured twenty-seven years. Justus signalized himself still more by betraying his brethren; while Simeon, struck, no doubt, with the evidences of divine grace apparent in the sufferers, embraced, at length, the faith which he came to destroy, gave up the world, preached the Gospel, and died a martyr. For a hundred and fifty years these servants of Christ underwent the horrors of persecution, with Christian patience and meekness; and if the acts of their martyrdom, their preaching, and their lives were distinctly recorded, there seems no doubt, but this people would appear to have resembled those, whom the Church justly reveres as having suffered in the behalf of Christ during the three first centuries. During all this time the power of the Spirit of God was with them; and they practised the precepts of the 13th chapter to the Romans, as

second century, and had probably now no existence. We see here a further proof of the vague and delusory modes of criminating the Paulicians.

well as believed and felt the precious truths contained in the doctrinal chapters of the same epistle. The blood of the martyrs was, in this case, as formerly, the seed of the Church: a succession of teachers and congregations arose, and a person named Sergius, who laboured among them thirty-three years, is confessed by the bigoted historians to have been a man of extraordinary virtue. The persecution had, however, some intermissions, till at length Theodora, the same empress, who fully established image-worship, exerted herself beyond any of her predecessors against them. Her inquisitors ransacked the lesser Asia, in search of these sectaries; and she is computed to have killed by the gibbet, by fire, and by sword, a hundred thousand persons.

Theodora, during the minority of her son Michael III. ruled as Empress, and fully established image-worship.

We have brought down the scanty history of this people to about the year 845. To undergo a constant scene of persecution with Christian meekness, and to render both to God and to Cæsar their dues all the time, at once require and evidence the strength of real grace. Of this the Paulicians seem to have been possessed till the period just mentioned. They remembered the injunction of Rev. xiii. 10: He that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword: here is the faith and patience of the Saints. Let Christians believe, rejoice in God, patiently suffer, return good for evil, and still obey those whom God hath set over them. These weapons have ever been found too hard for Satan: the Church has grown exceedingly, wherever they were faithfully handled; and the power of the Gospel has prevailed. This was the case very eminently with the Church, in the era of Dioclesian's persecution. She not only outlived the storm, but also under the conduct of Providence, became externally as well as internally, superior to her enemies. If the Paulicians had continued to act thus, similar consequences might have been rationally expected. But

Such is the History of the Paulicians to A. D. 845.

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faith and patience failed at length. We are ignorant of the steps by which they were gradually betrayed into a secular spirit. About the year 845, they murdered two persecutors, a governor and a bishop: and a soldier called Carbeas, who commanded the guards in the imperial armies, that he might revenge his father's death, who had been slain by the inquisitors, formed a band of Paulicians, who renounced their allegiance to the emperor, negotiated with the Mahometan powers, and, by their assistance, endeavoured to establish the independency of their sect.

Declension of the Paulicians.

A. D. 845.

Nicolas made Pope.

A. D. 858.

Theodora was succeeded by her son * Michael. Her cruelties and superstitions deserved the applause of Nicolas, who became pope of Rome in 858. In a letter he highly approved her conduct, and admired her on account of her implicit obedience to the Holy See. We learn from the biographer of the emperor Michael what Theodora had done to call forth the encomiums of this pontiff. "She resolved," says he, "to bring the Paulicians to the true faith, or cut them all off root and branch."—A resolution worthy of a truly Catholic princess!—"Pursuant to that resolution, she sent some noblemen and magistrates," not preachers or missionaries,—"into the different provinces of the empire; and by them some of those unhappy wretches were crucified, some put to the sword, and some thrown into the sea and drowned." Thus were they slaughtered to the number of one hundred thousand, and their goods and estates confiscated †.

The pope alluded to this bloody massacre, when he commends Theodora in the same letter for the

* This is Michael III, and is surnamed the Sot, or the Drunkard. He was the son of the emperor Theophilus, and came to the throne A. D. 842, under the tuition and regency of his mother Theodora.

† Porphyrog.

manly vigour she exerted, the Lord co-operating*, as he blasphemously adds, against obstinate and incorrigible heretics. Nicolas at the same time observes, that the heretics experiencing in her all the resolution and vigour of a man, could scarcely believe her to be a woman. Indeed zeal for religion had changed in Theodora, as it did in our Queen Mary, the tender and compassionate heart of a woman into that of a merciless and blood-thirsty tyrant. And here I am not disposed to suppress, that from the pope's own words, it appears, that the Apostolic See had its share in the glorious exploit just mentioned; for the pope, after telling her that the heretics dreaded, and at the same time admired, her resolution and steadiness in maintaining the purity of the Catholic faith, adds, "*and why so, but because you followed the directions of the Apostolic See*†?"

So truly was Antichristian tyranny now established at Rome!!

Michael, the son of Theodora, fled before the arms of Carbeas; whose successor Chrysocheir, in conjunction with the Mahometans, penetrated into the heart of Asia, and desolated the fairest provinces of the Greeks. In the issue, however, Chrysocheir was slain, the Paulician fortress Tephrice was reduced, and the power of the rebels was broken, though a number of them in the mountains, by the assistance of the Arabs, preserved an uncomfortable independence. The ferocious actions of the LATER Paulicians show, that they had lost the spirit of true religion: their schemes of worldly ambition were likewise frustrated. And similar consequences, in more recent ages, may be found to have resulted from political methods of supporting the Gospel.

A number of this sect, about the middle of the

* Domino cooperante. † Concil. Lab. Nic. Ep. xiv.

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eighth century, had been transplanted into Thrace, and subsisted there for ages, sometimes tolerated, at other times persecuted, by the reigning powers. Even to the end of the seventeenth century they still existed about the valleys of Mount Hæmus. Of their religious history, during this period, I can find nothing: and, in our days, they seem to have nothing more of the Paulician sect than the name. I cannot follow the learned author, to whom I owe much for this account*, in his conjectures concerning this people's dispersion through the European provinces. Nor does there seem any good evidence of the Waldenses owing their origin to the Paulicians. Such speculations are too doubtful to satisfy the minds of those, who prefer the solid evidence of facts to the conjectural ebullitions of a warm imagination.

On the whole, we have seen, in general, satisfactory proof of the work of divine grace in Asia Minor, commencing in the latter end of the seventh century, and extended to the former part of the ninth century. But, where secular politics begin, there the life and simplicity of vital godliness end. When the Paulicians began to rebel against the established government; to return evil for evil; to† MINGLE AMONG THE HEATHEN, the Mahometans; and to defend their own religion by arms, negotiations, and alliances, they ceased to become the LIGHT OF THE WORLD, and the salt of the earth. Such they had been for more than a hundred and eighty years, adorning and exemplifying the real Gospel, by a life of faith, hope, and charity, and by the preservation of the truth in a patient course of suffering, looking for true riches and honour in the world to come; and, no doubt, they are not frustrated of their hope. But, when secular maxims began to prevail among them, they shone, for a time, as heroes and patriots, in the false

* Gibbon. † Psalm cvi. ver. 35.

glare of human praise; but they lost the solidity of true honour, as all have done in all ages, who have descended from the grandeur of the passive spirit of conformity to Christ, and have preferred to that spirit the low ambition of earthly greatness *. CENT. IX.

CHAP. III.

THE OPPOSITION MADE TO THE CORRUPTIONS OF POPERY IN THIS CENTURY, PARTICULARLY BY CLAUDIUS, BISHOP OF TURIN.

CHAP. III.

We have seen the light of divine truth shedding its kindly influence in the east; let us now behold the reviving power of its beams in the west. We must not expect to observe it generally illuminating either of those two great divisions of the Christian world, but only shining in some particular districts. The absolute power of the pope, the worship of images, and the invocation of Saints and Angels, were opposed, as in the last century, by several princes and ecclesiastics. A council at Paris, held in the year 824, agreed with the council of Frankfort in the rejection of the decrees of the second council of Nice, and in the prohibition of image-worship. Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, wrote a book against the abuse of pictures and images; in which he maintained, that we ought not to worship any image of

Council at Paris, A. D. 824.

* Natalis Alexander, a voluminous French historian, and more vehemently attached to the popedom than Frenchmen commonly are, couples the Paulicians and also Claudius of Turin, of whom the reader will hear in the next Chapter, with Wickliffites, Lutherans, and Calvinists. He brands them as enemies to the adoration of the Cross of Christ, which, he says, the true Church always adored, "not only the genuine Cross, but an effigy of it, as soon as the Church obtained liberty under Christian princes." Tom. V. p. 636—638. This deserves to be considered as the testimony of a learned adversary to the evangelical character of the Paulicians, and of Claudius of Turin.

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God, except that which is God himself, his eternal Son; and, that there is no other Mediator between God and man, except Jesus Christ, both God and man. I have already observed, that the novel notion of transubstantiation was vigorously opposed by Rabanus and Scotus Erigena, the two most learned men of the west, in this century; nor was that doctrine, as yet, established in the kingdom of Antichrist. Rabanus treats it as an upstart opinion: it may be proper to add, that Bertram, a monk of Corbie, being asked whether the same body, which was crucified, was received in the mouth of the faithful, in the sacrament, answered, that "the difference is as great as between the pledge, and the thing for which the pledge is delivered; as great as between the representation and the reality." No Protestant, at this day, could speak more explicitly the sense of the Primitive Church. In Italy itself, Angilbertus, bishop of Milan, refused to own the pope's supremacy, nor did the Church of Milan submit to the Roman See till two hundred years afterwards*.

But these are only distant and remote evidences, that God had not forsaken his Church in Europe. There want not, however, more evident demonstrations of the same thing in the life and writings of Claudius, bishop of Turin, a character worthy to be held in high estimation by all, who fear God: but so little justice, in our times, is done to godliness, that while the names of statesmen, heroes, and philosophers are in every one's mouth, the name of this great reformer, has, probably, been not so much as heard of, by the generality of my readers. To me he seems to stand the FIRST in the order of time

* I have thus far, in this chapter, availed myself of the labours of Bishop Newton on the Prophecies, 3d Vol. 151, &c. In the sequel of the chapter, I make use of the remarks of Allix on the Churches of Piedmont, of the Centuriators, and of Fleury, though a Roman Catholic.

among the reformers. Let us collect the little information which we have been able to obtain concerning him. CENT. IX.

Claudius was born in Spain. In his early years he was a chaplain in the court of Lewis the meek: he was reputed to have great knowledge in the Scriptures*; in so much that Lewis perceiving the ignorance of a great part of Italy, in regard to the doctrines of the Gospel, says Fleury, and willing to provide the churches of Piedmont with one, who might stem the growing torrent of image-worship, promoted Claudius to the See of Turin, about the year 817. Claudius made bishop of Turin. A. D. 817. Claudius answered the expectations of the emperor: by his writings, he copiously expounded the Scriptures: by his preaching, he laboriously instructed the people: "in truth," says Fleury, "he began to preach and instruct with great application." The calumnies, with which his principles were aspersed, are abundantly confuted by his commentaries on various parts of the Old and New Testament, still extant in manuscripts, in various French libraries. A comment on the Epistle to the Galatians, is his only work which was committed to the press. In it he every where asserts the equality of all the Apostles with St. Peter. And, indeed, he always declares Jesus Christ to be the only proper head of the Church. He is severe against the doctrine of human merits, and of the exaltation of traditions to a height of credibility equal to that of the Divine Word. He maintains that we are to be saved by faith only; holds the fallibility of the Church, exposes the futility of praying for the dead, and the sinfulness of the idolatrous practices then supported by the Roman see. Such are the sentiments found in his commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians.

In his commentary on St. Matthew, besides an

* Fleury, Vol. V. B. 47. In this, and some other matters, the testimony of a Roman Catholic to the character of the first Protestant Reformer, is of great weight.

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explication of the Sacrament, very different from that of Paschasius, who defended transubstantiation, about sixteen years after, we meet with some pious sentiments worth transcribing. The words, "I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, till that day that I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom," he paraphrases thus: "no longer will I delight in the carnal ceremonies of the synagogue, among which the Paschal Lamb was most distinguished; for the time of my resurrection is at hand; that day will come, when, placed in the kingdom of God, exalted to the glory of immortal life, I shall be filled with a new joy, together with you, on account of the salvation of the people born again from the fountain of the same spiritual grace.—What else does he mean by new wine, but the immortality of renewed bodies? By saying 'with you,' he promises them the resurrection of their bodies, that they might put on immortality. The expression 'with you,' must not be referred to the same time, but to the same event of the renewal of the body. The Apostle declares that we are risen with Christ, that by the expectation of the future he might bring present joy*."

In the end of his commentary on Leviticus, dedicated to the abbot Theodemir, he writes some things, which may exhibit and illustrate his cares and labours in the support of real godliness.

"The beauty of the Eternal Truth and Wisdom doth not exclude those who come to her. God grant I may always have a constant will to enjoy her, for the love of whom I have undertaken this work! From the ends of the earth she is near to all who seek her: she instructs within, and converts those who behold her. No man can judge of her; no man can judge well without her. We are not

* This can hardly be allowed to be the whole of St. Paul's meaning, in the expression "risen with Christ;" nevertheless, the ideas of Claudius are good, so far as he goes.

commanded to go to the creature, that we may be happy, but to the Creator, who alone can fill us with bliss. The will fastening itself on the unchangeable good, obtains happiness. But when the will separates itself from the unchangeable good, and seeks her own good exclusively, or directs herself to inferior or external good, she falls from God."—These truths, conceived in the very taste of the bishop of Hippo, are followed by a long quotation from that father, which expressly forbids the worship of Saints; the substance of which is thus expressed: "We must honour them, because they deserve to be imitated, not worship them with an act of religion. We envy not their bliss in the uninterrupted enjoyment of God, but we love them the more, because we hope for something correspondent to these their excellencies, from him who is our God as well as theirs." These things, says Claudius, are the strongest mysteries of our faith. In defending this truth, I am become a reproach to my neighbours; those, who see me, scoff at me, and point at me to one another. But the Father of mercies and the God of all consolations, has comforted me in my tribulations*, that I may be able to comfort others, who are oppressed with sorrow and affliction. I rely on the protection of him, who has armed me with the armour of righteousness and of faith, the tried shield for my eternal salvation. CENT. IX.

Complaints had, it seems, been made against Claudius, at the court of Lewis, for having broken down images through his diocese, and for having written against the worship of them. Being reproached by Theodemir for his conduct, Claudius wrote an apology, of which the following is an extract †. "Being obliged to accept the bishopric, when I came to Turin, I found all the churches full of abominations and images; and because I began to destroy

* 2 Cor. i. † Fleury.

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what every one adored, every one began to open his mouth against me.—They say, we do not believe that there is any thing divine in the image; we only reverence it in honour of the person whom it represents. I answer, if they, who have quitted the worship of devils, honour the images of saints, they have not forsaken idols; they have only changed the names. For whether you paint upon a wall the pictures of St. Peter or St. Paul; or those of Jupiter, Saturn, or Mercury, they are all dead, and are therefore now neither gods, nor apostles, nor men. If you worship Peter or Paul, you may have changed the name, but the error continues the same. If men must be adored, there would be less absurdity in adoring them when alive, while they are the image of God, than after they are dead, when they only resemble stocks and stones. And if we are not allowed to adore the works of God, much less are we allowed to adore the works of men.—If the Cross of Christ ought to be adored, because he was nailed to it, for the same reason we ought to adore mangers, because he was laid in one; and swaddling-clothes, because he was wrapped in them." He goes on to mention other similar instances, and adds, "we have not been commanded to adore the cross, but to bear it, and to deny ourselves.—As to your assertion, that I speak against the going to Rome by way of penance, it is not true; I neither approve nor disapprove such pilgrimages; to some they are not useful, to others they are not prejudicial. It is a great perversion of the words 'thou art Peter,' &c. to infer from them, that eternal life is to be gained by a journey to Rome, and by the intercession of St. Peter.—The Apostolic, that is, the pope, is not he, who fills the See of the Apostle, but he, who discharges its duties."

Such, says Fleury, were the errors of Claudius of Turin. He then tell us, that they were refuted by a recluse called Dungal. He gives us a few extracts

from this writer, which it will be perfectly needless to recite; for, as Fleury owns, Dungal scarcely makes use of any arguments; and "in truth," continues he, "the main proofs in this matter have always been the tradition and constant usage of the Church." In the judgment of men who determine controversies, which enter into the essence of Christianity by the Scriptures alone, the victory of Claudius in this dispute is decisive.

We are obliged, however, to Dungal, for the preservation of the extracts of the apology. In addition to the argumentative parts, there are also some pathetic exhortations interspersed in the work, which show the ardour of the bishop's mind, and the charitable zeal for divine truth and the salvation of souls, with which he was endowed. I shall present the reader with a few sentences*. "All these things are ridiculous, rather worthy of lamentation than of grave discussion; but we are obliged to describe them, in opposition to fools, and to declaim against those hearts of stone, whom the arrows and sentences of the divine Word cannot pierce, and therefore we are under a necessity to assault them in this manner. Come to yourselves again, ye wretched transgressors: why are ye gone astray from the truth, and fallen in love with vanity? Why do you make the souls of multitudes the associates of devils, by the worship of idols, estranging them from their Creator, and precipitating them into everlasting damnation?—Return, ye blind, to your light.—Shall we not believe God, when he swears, that neither Noah, nor Daniel, nor Job † shall deliver son or daughter by their righteousness? For this end he makes the declaration, that none might put confidence in the intercession of saints.—Ye fools, who run to Rome, to seek there for the intercession of an Apostle, when will ye

* Allix. † Ezek. xiv.

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be wise? What would St. Augustine say of you, whom we have so often quoted?"

If the works of this great and good man had been published as faithfully as those of his adversaries, I doubt not but he would appear to us in a much more striking light than he can do from a few imperfect quotations. But his writings were either suppressed or secreted. The reign of idolatry had taken place, and the world worshipped the "BEAST." The labours, however, of Claudius, were not in vain. In his own diocese, at least, he checked the growing evil; and Romish writers have owned, that the valleys of Piedmont, which belonged to his bishopric, preserved his opinions in the ninth and tenth centuries. Whence it is probable, that the Churches of the Waldenses were either derived, or at least received much increase and confirmation from his labours.

If we look, in an evangelical view, at the subject matter of this bishop's preaching and expositions, it will appear that the controversy between him and his adversaries was, whether man shall be justified before God BY JESUS CHRIST THROUGH FAITH ALONE, or whether he shall betake himself to OTHER REFUGES for the peace of his disquieted conscience. What those other refuges may be, will much depend on the customs and habits of the times in which a man lives. In an age, like our own, of great civilization and refinement, they will, chiefly, be acts of humanity and kindness to the needy: in an age of superstition, they will be ceremonial observances, and the whole apparatus of WILL-WORSHIP*. Against the false reliefs of a burdened conscience, which the popedom exhibited, this first Protestant reformer militated in much Christian zeal, and pointed out to his hearers and his readers the mediation of Jesus Christ, as the sole and all-sufficient

* See Coloss. ii.

object of dependance. With what success this was done among his people, we have no account; but, doubtless, so great a light was not set up in vain; and could I recite the effects of his labours in Piedmont, the account would in all probability be both pleasing and profitable to evangelical minds. Let us see what farther discoveries we can make of his spirit and views, from the extracts of his writings drawn from another of his adversaries. CENT. IX.

This * was JONAS, BISHOP OF ORLEANS. He wrote three books against Claudius, filled with invectives. He mentions, however, such reasonings made use of by his adversary, as it was not in his power to overturn, particularly the authority of the second commandment, on which hinge, indeed, the whole controversy turns, so far as it relates to the worship of images. In regard to pilgrimages to Rome, Claudius observes, that the greater part, in consequence of them, become worse men than they were before. In opposing the popedom, he observes, that men, void of all spiritual understanding, misapplying those words of our Lord, "I will give unto thee the keys," &c. † ignorant men, setting aside all spiritual understanding, hope to obtain eternal life by making pilgrimages to Rome. Hence we see, that the power of the popedom was much founded on the misguided consciences of men. Persons distressed, on account of their sins, naturally catch at every support, which offers them relief. And, the true light of the Gospel of peace no longer shining, they availed themselves of the delusory consolations offered by the popedom; and thus, at once, gained a false peace, hardened themselves in real wickedness, and supported the grandeur of Antichrist. What a blessing is the real Gospel! It both consoles and sanctifies the sinner, and removes the most powerful incitements to super-

* Centuriat. Magd. Cent. IX. † Matt. xvi. 19.

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stition. But, to proceed with the words of Claudius. "It is not said, 'whatsoever thou shalt bind in heaven, shall be bound on earth.'—By this we should know, that the ministry of the bishops of the Church continues only so long as they remain upon earth. After they have left this world, it ceases: St. Peter has no longer any influence in the government of the Church militant; and his successors exercise the office, so long as they live indeed, but no longer*." From the year 823, Claudius wrote against the prevailing superstition, and lived to the year 839. That he was not put to death for confessing the real faith of Christ, seems to have been, under Providence, owing to the protection of the French court. The cause, which he espoused, was still, in part, supported in the western churches; and the Roman hierarchy was not yet able to establish idolatry in its full extent, and to punish all its opposers. It is proper to add, that even the adversaries of Claudius did not insist on the worship of images; they only asserted that they were innocent and useful. So far were the decrees of the papacy from being owned as decisive, through Europe. At the same time, it must be confessed, that the middle path, which first had the sanction of Gregory, and was afterwards confirmed by the Carolin books and the council of Frankfort, naturally paved the way for the gradual establishment of idolatry.

Claudius, for sixteen years, writes against the prevailing superstitions.

Dies. A. D. 839.

* I have added a word or two explanatory of the meaning, which, on account of the imperfection of the quotation, is sufficiently embarrassed. I apprehend, he is inferring from the real words of our Lord, "whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven," that St. Peter's episcopal acts terminated with his life; whereas, if it had been said, whatsoever thou shalt bind in heaven, shall be bound on earth, some countenance might seem to be given to the idea of the continuance of his power on erath, in the persons of his successors. Cent. Magd. Cent. IX. 118.

CHAP. IV.

THE CASE OF GOTTESCHALCUS.

CENT. IX.

THE subject of predestination and grace had been formerly controverted in the churches of France, with a considerable degree of acuteness and ingenuity, and what is still more pleasing to a Christian mind, with seriousness, candour, and charity *. We have seen with what zeal the doctrine of divine grace had been defended and illustrated by the followers of Augustine, and what a salutary influence had attended that doctrine on the knowledge, the spirit, and the lives of Christians. It has appeared also, that many who, partly through an ill-grounded fear of pernicious consequences, and partly through a misunderstanding of the nature of the subject, were averse to the sentiments of Augustine, did still sincerely abhor Pelagianism, and with a happy inconsistency, lived humbly dependent on divine grace alone, though in words they maintained Semi-Pelagianism. But, as superstition, idolatry, and ignorance increased, the truly evangelical views of Augustine were more and more thrown into the shade, and the case of Gotteschalcus showed, that it was now no longer permitted to a divine to promulge the sentiments of the bishop of Hippo with impunity.

Gotteschalcus was born in Germany: from early life he had been a monk; and had devoted himself to theological inquiries. He was peculiarly fond of the writings of Augustine, and entered with much zeal into his sentiments †. That he really

* See p. 589 of Vol. II.

† I have extracted the best account of this person which I could from Fleury and Du Pin, both Roman Catholic writers: I have availed myself also of the remarks of Mosheim. From

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held the doctrines of that father, seems evident from the account which is transmitted to us, though it is but scanty. He expressly owned, that the wicked were condemned for their own demerits. If he was charged with making God the author of sin, it was no more than what befel the bishop of Hippo; and Fleury himself owns, that he was misrepresented by his adversaries. The most culpable thing, which I find in him, if indeed a certain confession of faith, ascribed to him, be genuine, is this, that he offered to undergo a trial by fire, on this condition, that if he was preserved unhurt, his doctrine should be allowed to be divine. If he was really guilty of this enthusiastic presumption, the issue of the persecution which he afterwards underwent, was calculated to humble him, and cause him to learn more practically than he had ever done, the real power of those doctrines for which he honestly suffered.

Gotteschalcus travels into Dalmatia and Pannonia. A. D. 846.

About the year 846, he left his monastery, and went into Dalmatia and Pannonia, where he spread the doctrines of Augustine, under a pretence, it was said by his enemies, of preaching the Gospel to the infidels. At his return, he remained some time in Lombardy, and in 847, he held a conference with Notingus, bishop of Vienne, concerning predestination. His zeal gave offence to the bishop, who prevailed on Rabanus, the archbishop of Mentz, to undertake the confutation of the novel heresy, as it was now decreed. Rabanus calumniated Gotteschalcus with those monstrous and licentious consequences, with which the doctrines of divine grace have in all

the writings of the Magdeburgensian Centuriators, where I might have expected the most equitable and the most just account, I could collect nothing. They handle the subject briefly and confusedly, and join with the enemies of Gotteschalchus in condemning him, without affording their readers any proper materials, on which they might form a judgment for themselves.

ages been aspersed, and from which St. Paul himself was not exempted: and having dressed the sentiments of his adversary in the most odious colours, he found it no hard task to expose him to infamy. The learned monk undertook to defend himself in writing, and proposed the subject to the consideration of the most able men of his time; and, against the great credit and authority of his adversary, he opposed the renowned name of Augustine. But no cause ever appeared with more disadvantage in our times than that of Gotteschalcus. For we have not his treatise, composed against Rabanus; only some fragments of it have been preserved to us, by Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, who, the reader will soon be convinced, was not a man fit to be trusted with the care of his reputation. CENT. IX.

In a synod held at Mentz, Gotteschalcus was condemned; and Rabanus, observing that he was of the diocese of Soissons, which was subject to the archbishop of Rheims, sent him to Hincmar, calling him a vagabond, and declaring that he had seduced several persons, who were become less careful of their salvation, since they had learned from Gotteschalcus to say, Why should I labour for my salvation? If I am predestinated to damnation, I cannot avoid it; and, on the contrary, if I am predestinated to salvation, whatever sins I am guilty of, I shall certainly be saved *. Gotteschalcus condemned in the synod of Mentz. A. D. 848.

Hincmar entered fully into the views of Rabanus; and, in a council of bishops, examined Gotteschalcus, who still maintained his doctrine with firmness. On this account he was condemned as

* It is evident, that such reasoning as this, might, with equal plausibility, be alleged against the doctrine of the ixth Chap. to the Romans. Whoever would see this subject sifted to the bottom, may consult Edwardes's admirable treatise on Freewill, where he will find the vulgar objections proved, I think, irrefragably to be fallacious. In the Analogy of Bishop Butler also (Chap. VI. Part I. of the Opinion of Necessity) he will meet with some excellent observations.

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a heretic, degraded from the priesthood, and ordered to be beaten with rods and imprisoned. As nothing, however, was proved against him, except his adherence to the sentiments of Augustine, which were still held in estimation in the Church, this shows, says Du Pin, that he was an injured man.

And now the presumptuous boasts of Gotteschalcus, if they were his boasts indeed, met with an humiliating check. For, while he was whipped in the presence of the emperor Charles and the bishops with great severity, and was given to understand that he must cast into the fire with his own hand a writing, in which he had made a collection of Scripture-texts, in order to prove his opinion, he, at length, overpowered by his sufferings, dropped the book into the flames; after which he was kept close prisoner by Hincmar, in a monastery. This method of convincing a heretic of his error, seems, however, to have been by no means satisfactory to him who had made use of it. For Hincmar still took pains to persuade Gotteschalcus to retract his sentiments, but in vain. The injured pastor maintained, with his last breath, the doctrine for which he suffered, and died in prison in the year 870*.

Gotteschalcus dies in prison.

A. D. 870.

Hincmar hearing that he lay at the point of death, sent him a formulary, which he was to subscribe, in order to his being received into the communion of the Church. Gotteschalcus rejected the offer with indignation. He refused to retract to the last; and was denied Christian burial, by the orders of Hincmar.

This is all that I can find material concerning Gotteschalcus. That he was an humble and sincere follower of Christ in the main, will scarce be doubted by those who make a fair estimate of his constancy in suffering, and at the same time reflect,

* Cave.

that no moral turpitude is affixed to his memory. Even in that age there wanted not men, who remonstrated loudly against the barbarity with which he had been treated. Remigius, archbishop of Lyons, distinguished himself among these; and, in a council held at Valence, in Dauphiny, in the year 855, both Gotteschalcus and his doctrine were vindicated and defended. Two subsequent councils confirmed the decrees of this council. The Churches of Lyons, Vienne, and Arles, formerly renowned for piety, vigorously supported the sentiments of Gotteschalcus; and it was apparent, that all relish for the doctrines of grace was not lost in the Church. It is very extraordinary, that the cause of Gotteschalcus should prove, in the end, victorious, while he himself remained under the power of persecution. But the great secular influence of Hincmar, who for near forty years presided at Rheims, and made himself highly useful to kings and princes, seems to account for this.

Gotteschalcus's opinions supported at the council of Valence, A. D. 855.

It would be uninteresting to detail an account of the writings on both sides, which were published on the occasion of this controversy. One lesson the case before us is peculiarly calculated to teach, namely, not to condemn any person for consequences which others may draw from his doctrine, and which he himself both speculatively and practically disavows*. This injustice was never more flagrantly committed, than in the transactions which we have briefly reviewed. Of Hincmar, much information indeed is left us in ecclesiastical story; but I do not seem to have any more employment for him in this work, than I have for the princes of France and Germany of that period. It is not hard to form, on the whole, some estimate of the state of religion at that time in France. The spirit of Christianity was much decayed; but there were,

* See Burnet's Exposition of XXXIX Articles, Preface, p. 8 & 9.—And Article 17. p. 166. Fol. Edit.

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doubtless, a number of persons, to whom Christ and his grace were precious: and the influence of evangelical truth was still so strong, that all the cruelty, activity, and artifice of Hincmar, one of the most subtil politicians of that age, were not able to extirpate it.

CHAP. V.

THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN THIS CENTURY.

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In this century the Churches of the east and west, through the pride and ambition of the pontiffs of Rome and Constantinople, began to be separated from one another. Of such a division, which makes a great noise, in what is commonly called ecclesiastical history, it is sufficient for a historian of the Church of Christ to say, that the wound, after repeated attempts, was never healed. Both the east and the west, indeed, were full of idolatry and darkness, and seemed to vie with each other in supporting the kingdom of Satan. Providence, however, made use of the ambitious spirit of the prelates for the still more extensive propagation of the Gospel. In this chapter I shall collect the information upon this subject, which may be extracted from an enormous mass of ecclesiastical rubbish; and, at the same time, shall lay before my readers some evidences of the progress of the good work, among the nations, which had been, in part, evangelized in the two last centuries.

Photius disputes with Ignatius, the patriarch of Constantinople.

A. D. 846.

Constantine, afterwards called Cyril, was born at Thessalonica, of a Roman family, and was educated at Constantinople. In 846, the famous Photius, who, by much iniquity, at length obtained the bishopric of Constantinople, envying Ignatius, at that time bishop, contended in opposition to him,

that every man had two souls. Being reproved by Cyril, he said, that he meant not to hurt any one, but only to try the logical abilities of Ignatius. "You have thrown your darts into the crowd," said Cyril, "yet pretend that none will be hurt. How keen soever the eyes of your wisdom be, they are blinded by the smoke of avarice and envy. Your passion against Ignatius has deceived you." Cyril indeed seems to have been as much superior to Photius* in piety, as he was his inferior in learning: he became one of the most active and useful missionaries of this century; and Providence opened to him a door of solid utility among the idolatrous nations†. CENT. IX.

The Bulgarians were a barbarous and savage people, whose neighbourhood had long been troublesome to the Greek emperors. The sister of their king Bogoris, having been taken captive in a military incursion, was brought to Constantinople, and there adopted Christianity. Upon her redemption and return to her own country, she gave a strong evidence, that her change of religion had been more than nominal. She was struck with grief and compassion, to see the king, her brother, enslaved to idolatry, and she used the most cogent arguments in her power, in order to convince him of the vanity of his worship. Bogoris was affected with her arguments; but was not prevailed upon to receive the Gospel, till, a famine and a plague appearing in Bulgaria, she persuaded him to pray to the God of the Christians. He did so, and the plague ceased. There was something so remarkable in the event, that Bogoris was induced to send for missionaries to Constantinople; and at length received baptism, together with many of his people‡. Cyril and his devout brother Methodius, were the instruments of

* Photius himself became patriarch of Constantinople about A. D. 857.

† See Alban Butler, Vol. XII. ‡ Porphyrogennetus.

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these blessings to the Bulgarians. Bogoris had desired Methodius to draw him a picture. Methodius chose for his subject the last judgment, and explained it. This is supposed to have induced the king to receive baptism. The event happened about the year 861*. That same pope Nicolas, who so warmly applauded the sanguinary exploits of the empress Theodora against the Paulicians, rejoiced at the opportunity, which this religious change among the Bulgarians afforded him, of extending his influence. He sent bishops, who preached and baptized throughout the country: and Bogoris sent his son to Rome, with many Lords: he consulted the pope on a variety of subjects, and entreated him to send pastors into Bulgaria. Nicolas rejoiced, says Fleury†, not only on account of the conversion of the Bulgarians, but the more, because they came so far to seek instruction from the holy See. They had, however, though attended with many superstitions, the word of God, and the name of Christ introduced among them. The Saviour, in some sense, was preached, notwithstanding that pride and sinister motives predominated altogether in the Roman See; and St. Paul, in such a case, would have said, "I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice‡." Nor is there any reason to believe, that all the missionaries would be no less corrupt than the pope: on the contrary, we cannot doubt but the word was not preached altogether in vain. These transactions took place about the year 866.

Bogoris is baptized. A. D. 861.

Successes of the missionaries. A. D. 866.

About the same time Cyril, and his brother Methodius, missionaries among the Bulgarians, laboured also among the Sclavonians and the Chazari§. These people lived on the banks of the Danube, and begged the emperor Michael III. and his mother Theodora, to send them some instructors. Cyril and his brother Methodius were sent to preach

* See Alban Butler, Vol. XII.
† Fleury, B. L. 49.
‡ Philipp. i. 18.
§ Fleury, B. L. 54.

to them. The Cham and his whole nation were baptized: and Cyril gave a noble proof of his disinterestedness in refusing those presents, which the munificence of the prince would have heaped upon him * CENT. IX.

Cyril arriving at Chersona, continued there some time, to learn the language of the Chazari; which is supposed to have been the Sclavonian tongue, because it is certain that Constantine translated the sacred Books into that language. And as the people had not then the use of letters, he invented an alphabet for their use, and was very successful in teaching Christianity among the Chazari. He made the greater impression on their minds, because of the unquestionable proofs which he gave them of his disinterestedness. After this, Bartilas, prince of Moravia, understanding what had been done among the Chazari, desired the Greek emperor Michael to send some missionaries to instruct his people likewise in Christianity. Michael sent the same Constantine and Methodius, who carried with them the same Sclavonian Gospel, taught the children the letters, which they had invented, laboured in their mission, and instructed the people four years and a half.

The king of Moravia was baptized with many of his subjects. Cyril died a monk: Methodius was consecrated bishop of Moravia. The Sclavonian tongue, said to have been invented by these two missionaries, is, to this day, used in the liturgy of the Moravians. Complaint was made to Pope John VIII. of the novelty of worshipping in a barbarous tongue; but he condescended to own himself satisfied with the reasons assigned by the missionaries. Bogoris, king of Bulgaria, gave up his crown about the year 880, and retired into a

Bogoris resigns his crown. A. D. 880.

* Alban Butler, Vol. XII.

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monastery. Methodius, after a long course of labours, died in an advanced age*.

These were noble works, and some divine unction, amidst all the superstitions, no doubt, attended them. In the mean time, Nicolas of Rome, and Photius of Constantinople, two of the proudest men of any age, were acrimoniously inveighing against one another, and striving each to secure to himself the obedience of the new converts. There is reason to hope, that the missionaries themselves were of a better spirit: and if I had materials of their transactions before me, I would with pleasure present them to the reader; but the squabbles of the prelates themselves for ecclesiastical dominion, and the effects of those squabbles, are scarcely worth his attention.

Provinces of Dalmatia solicit missionaries.

A. D. 867.

It appears from one of the invectives of Photius, against Nicolas, that the Russians, hitherto barbarous and savage, had received a Christian bishop, and were then under instructions. Also, about the year 867, certain provinces of Dalmatia sent an embassy to Constantinople, imploring the emperor Basilius to supply them with Christian teachers. Their request was granted, and the pale of the Church was extended throughout those provinces†.

If we turn our eyes toward the countries which had been evangelized in the last century, we may discern some traces of the spirit of godliness still remaining among them. Length of time, under the influence of natural depravity, had not, as yet, destroyed all the seeds of that divine simplicity, which, as we have had repeated occasion to observe, is always the most pure in the infancy of religion. Frederic of Devonshire, nephew to Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, so renowned in the last century, was appointed bishop of Utrecht; and dining

* Alb. But. Vol. XII.

† Porphyrogen. See Mosheim, Chap. I. Cent. IX.

with the emperor, Lewis the Meek, was exhorted by him to discharge his office with faithfulness and integrity. The bishop, pointing to a fish on the table, asked whether it was proper to take hold of it by the head or by the tail. "By the head, to be sure," replied the emperor. "Then I must begin my career of faithfulness," answered Frederic, "with your majesty." He proceeded to rebuke the emperor for an incestuous connexion, which he openly maintained with Judith the empress; and, in the spirit of John the Baptist, told him, "that it was not lawful for him to have her." Lewis had not expected this rebuke; and, like Herod, was not disposed to give up his Herodias. No sooner did the empress hear of this rebuke, than, in the true temper of an incensed adultress, she began to plot the destruction of Frederic; and, by the help of assassins, she at length effected it. Frederic being mortally wounded, insisted, however, that no blood should be shed on his account; and died in a spirit of martyrdom worthy of the relation of Boniface. In him the Hollanders lost a faithful prelate; but his death would preach a salutary doctrine among them.—Frederic was murdered about the year 833*.

CENT. IX.

Murder of the bishop of Utrecht. A. D. 833.

Haymo, a monk of Fulda, a scholar of Alcuin†, was chosen bishop of Halberstadt in Saxony, in the year 841. He was by descent an Englishman, a relation of Bede, and took much pains in preaching to the people. His writings are voluminous, but the matter of them is chiefly extracted from the fathers. He assisted in the condemnation of Gotteschalcus at Mentz; nor is it hard to conceive, that a pious person might be deceived by the elaborate misrepresentations of Rabanus: though I should think it very improbable, that Haymo would be at all concerned in the barbarities afterwards exercised

Haymo elected bishop of Halberstadt. A. D. 841.

* Ingulph's Hist. See Collier's Ecc. Hist. 1 Vol.

† Du Pin, Cent. IX.

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on the supposed heretic at Rheims. For Haymo seems to have thought and written on the doctrines of grace with more unction and vigour than most of his contemporaries. He composed comments on many parts of the Holy Scriptures. A few specimens may serve to show what sort of doctrine was then preached to the recent Churches of Germany.

"By* the book of life, we ought to understand the divine predestination, as it is written, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

"Man of himself departing from God returns not of himself to God.—God works all in all; by which words human arrogance is removed, since without the Holy Spirit our weakness can effect no real good, whether great or small†."

"We are not only unable to perfect any good, without divine grace and mercy, preceding and following us, but not even to think any. For the grace of God prevents us, that we may be willing, and follows us, that we may be able.—Every good thing that we have, the good will, and the good work, is not from ourselves, but from God."

His views of the distinction between the law and the Gospel, a subject in his time very little understood, have a considerable degree of perspicuity. "In the law, no room is reserved for repentance, but its language is, the soul that sinneth shall die. The Gospel saith, I will not the death of a sinner. —The Law is not of faith‡. It is the province of faith to believe and to hope things invisible. The law therefore is not fulfilled by faith, but by works. But the Gospel is fulfilled by faith rather than by works; for faith alone saves!§" Precious sentiments! well understood by serious and humble spirits, coming to Christ for rest, who find themselves by the law debarred of all hope of salvation, because of

* Magd. Cent. IX. p. 52. † Id. p. 60.
‡ Galatians iii. 12. § Magd. 64.

their consciousness of entire depravity. It is not necessary to give distinct quotations, in order to prove that Haymo had the same imperfect and inaccurate views of justification which we have observed in Augustine. CENT IX.

"The faith, by which we believe in God, is given by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: it is not in man naturally, it is given by God; for, if it were in us, by nature, all would have it.—Faith, remission of sins, and all the gifts of God, are freely given to believers *."

Does it not appear a cruel thing to disfigure such lovely pictures of evangelical truth? But historical veracity is a stubborn thing. This same Haymo, who knew so much of Christ, was so infected with the growth of idolatrous superstition, that, in an homily concerning virgins, he says, "it is highly fitting that we supplicate her,"—he means some virgin, whose festival he was then celebrating,—"with devout prayers, that she may make us comfortable in this life by her merits and prayers, and in the next acceptable to God †." How inconsistent are these sentiments with his avowed faith in the Mediator! But such was the torrent of the times! —I see Germany, which had been happily tutored in the infant simplicity of Christian faith, gradually perverted by the idolatry which derived its strength from the papal dominion. Haymo, however, most probably did not mean what he said, in the full import of his own words; and he seems to have felt so sincerely the spirit of Gospel-truth, that I am tempted to suppose, that his homilies were interpolated by what are called PIOUS FRAUDS, the introduction of which became a common practice in the dark ages.

Haymo continued bishop of Halberstadt for twelve years, and died in 853. A rare light, which shone in the midst of darkness! Haymo dies. A. D. 853.

* Magd. p. 67. † Magd. p. 111.

We have seen some evidences of the power of Christian truth, in this century, among the recent Churches of Germany and Holland. Let us now look to the north of Europe, and see by what gradations Divine Providence paved the way for the propagation of the Gospel in the frozen regions of Scandinavia*, and on the shores of the Baltic, which had hitherto been enveloped in the most deplorable darkness of paganism.

Adelard, a Monk of Corbie, in Picardy, a shining character.

Adelard, cousin-german to Charlemagne, was a bright luminary in the Christian world at the beginning of this century. He had been invited to the court in his youth: but fearing the infection of such a mode of life, he had retired; and, at the age of twenty years became a monk of Corbie, in Picardy†, and was at length chosen abbot of the monastery. His imperial relation, however, forced him again to attend the court, where he still preserved the dispositions of a recluse, and took every opportunity, which business allowed, for private prayer and meditation. After the death of Charlemagne he was, on unjust suspicions, banished by Lewis the Meek, to a monastery on the coast of Aquitain, in the isle of Hiere. After a banishment of five years, Lewis, sensible at length of his own injustice, recalled Adelard, and heaped on him the highest honours. The monk, was, however, the same man in prosperity and in adversity, and in 823 obtained leave to return to his Corbie. Every week he addressed each of the monks in particular: he exhorted them in pathetic discourses; and laboured for the spiritual good of the country around his monastery. His liberality seems to have bordered on excess: his humility induced him to receive advice from the meanest monk: when he was desired to live less austerely, he would

He returns to Corbie. A. D. 823.

* This term commonly includes the three kingdoms of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway.

† A. Butler, Vol. I.

frequently say, I will take care of your servant, that he may be enabled to attend on you the longer. Another Adelard, who had governed the monastery during his banishment, by the direction of the first Adelard, prepared the foundation of a distinct monastery, called new Corbie, near Paderborn, beside the Weser, as a nursery for evangelical labourers, who should instruct the northern nations. The first Adelard completed the scheme: went himself to new Corbie twice; and settled its discipline. The success of this truly charitable project was great: many learned and zealous missionaries were furnished from the new seminary; and it became a light to the north of Europe. Adelard promoted learning in his monasteries: instructed the people both in Latin and French; and, after his second return from Germany to old Corbie, he died in 827, aged 73. Such is the account given us of Adelard, a character, there is reason to believe, of eminent piety. The fruits of his faithful labours appear to have been still greater after his death than during his life. To convert monasteries into seminaries of pastoral education was a thought far above the taste of the age in which he lived; and tended to emancipate those superstitious institutions from the unprofitable and illiberal bondage in which they had subsisted for many generations.

CENT. IX.

Dies. A. D. 827.

In * the year 814, Harold, King of Denmark, being expelled from his dominions, implored the protection of the emperor Lewis, the son and successor of Charlemagne. That prince persuaded him to receive Christian baptism; and foreseeing that Harold's reception of Christianity would increase the difficulty of his restoration, he gave him a district in Friezeland for his present maintenance. Lewis,

Expulsion of Harold, king of Denmark. A. D. 814.

* I have extracted the subsequent account of Anscarius from various parts of Fleury, in his history of the 9th century; not without an attention also to the history of the same missionary in Alban Butler, and in the Centur. Magd.

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dismissing Harold to his own country, inquired after some pious person, who might accompany him, and confirm both the king and his attendants in the Christian religion. But it was not easy to find a man disposed to undertake such a journey. At length Vala, abbot of old Corbie, who had succeeded his brother Adelard, whose history we have just considered, said to the emperor, "I have, in my monastery, a monk, who earnestly wishes to suffer for the sake of Christ; a man of understanding and integrity, and peculiarly fitted for such a work. But I cannot promise, that he will undertake the journey." The emperor ordered him to send for the man; Anscarius was his name. When the nature of the employment was opened to the monk, he professed his readiness to go. "I by no means command you, said Vala, to enter on so difficult and dangerous a service; I leave it to your option." Anscarius, however, persisted in his resolution: it was matter of surprise to many, that he should choose to expose himself among strangers, barbarians, and pagans; much pains were taken by many to dissuade him; but in vain: while preparations were making for his departure, he gave himself up to reading and prayer. This excellent monk had been employed as a teacher, both in old and new Corbie, and had distinguished himself by his talents and virtues. Aubert, a monk of noble birth, a great confident of Vala, and steward of his house, offered himself as a companion to Anscarius. Harold, with the two strangers, proceeded on his journey; but neither he nor his attendants, rude and barbarous in their manners, were at all solicitous for the accommodation of the missionaries, who therefore suffered much in the beginning of their journey. When the company arrived at Cologne, Hadebald the archbishop, commiserating the two strangers, gave them a bark, in which they might convey their effects. Harold, struck with the convenience of the accommodation, entered into the

vessel with the missionaries; and they went down the Rhine into the sea, and came to the frontiers of Denmark. But Harold finding access to his dominions impossible, because of the power of those who had usurped the sovereignty, remained in Friezeland, in the district assigned to him by the emperor. CENT. IX.

This king of Denmark seems to have been appointed by Divine Providence, only as an instrument to introduce Anscarius into the mission. For we hear little more of him afterwards. The two French monks laboured with zeal and success in Friezeland, both among Christians and pagans. Harold sent some of his own slaves to be taught by them; and in a little time they had above twelve children in their school. Above two years they laboured, and were made instruments of good to souls: after this Aubert ended his days by a disease.

Anscarius commissioned to visit Sweden. A. D. 829.

About the year 829, many Swedes having expressed a desire to be instructed in Christianity, Anscarius received a commission from the emperor Lewis to visit Sweden. Another monk of old Corbie, Vitmar by name, was assigned as his companion; and a pastor was left to attend on king Harold, in the room of Anscarius. In the passage, the two missionaries were met by pirates, who took the ship and all its effects. On this occasion, Anscarius lost the emperor's presents, and forty volumes, which he had collected for the use of the ministry. But his mind was still determined: and he and his partner having with difficulty got to land, they gave themselves up to the direction of Providence, and walked on foot a long way, now and then crossing some arms of the sea in boats. Such are the triumphs of Christian faith and love. They arrived at Birca, from the ruins of which, Stockholm took its rise, though built at some distance from it*. The king of Sweden received them favourably; and his council

* Puffendorff's Hist. of Sweden.

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unanimously agreed to permit them to remain in the country, and to preach the Gospel. Success attended their pious efforts. Many Christian captives in Sweden rejoiced at the opportunity of the communion of Saints which was now restored to them; and, among others, Herigarius, governor of the city, was baptized. This man erected a church on his own estate, and persevered in the profession and support of the Gospel.

After six months, the two missionaries returned with letters written by the king's own hand, into France, and informed Lewis of their success. The consequence was, that Anscarius was appointed archbishop of Hamburg. This great city, being in the neighbourhood of Denmark, was henceforth looked on as the metropolis of all the countries north of the Elbe which should embrace Christianity. The mission into Denmark, was at the same time attended to; and Gausbert, a relation of Ebbo, archbishop of Rheims, who, as well as Anscarius, was concerned in these missions, was sent to reside as a bishop in Sweden: there the number of Christians increased. But perhaps the reader has anticipated the observation; namely, that it was the genius of these dark ages to provide for the hierarchy prematurely; and to constitute bishops and dioceses over large districts in which scarcely any Christians were to be found.

Further account of Anscarius, and of the taking of Hamburg.

Anscarius,—such was the ecclesiastical discipline of the times,—by the order of the emperor Lewis went to Rome, that he might receive the confirmation of the new archbishopric of Hamburg. Returning to the diocese, he gained over many pagans, brought up children in the Christian faith, and redeemed captives, whom he instructed and employed in the ministry. In the year 845, his faith was tried by a severe affliction. Hamburg was besieged, taken, and pillaged by the Normans, and he himself escaped with difficulty. On this

A. D. 845.

occasion, he lost all his effects; but his mind was so serene, that he was not heard to complain: "The Lord gave," said he, "and the Lord hath taken away." It was no inconsiderable addition to his sufferings, to hear, that Gausbert, whom he had sent into Sweden, was banished through a popular insurrection; in consequence of which, the work of the ministry was for some years at a stand in that country. Anscarius, reduced to great poverty, and deserted by many of his followers, persisted still with unwearied patience in the exercise of his mission in the north of Europe, till the bishopric of Bremen was conferred upon him. Hamburg and Bremen were from that time considered as united in one diocese. It was not till some pains were taken to overcome his scruples, that he could be prevailed on to accept of this provision for his wants. About the year 852, Anscarius sent a priest, called Ardgarius, into Sweden, to strengthen the faith of the few Christians who remained there. Among these was Herigarius, who had supported the cause of Christ, while it was in the most feeble and afflicted state.

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Anscarius sends a Christian teacher into Sweden. A. D. 852.

Though Anscarius had made no great impression on Sweden, he was not discouraged in his views of propagating the faith in the north. He still had his eye on Denmark, which had been his first object: and having gained the friendship of Eric, who reigned there, he was enabled to gain a footing in that country; and to plant the Gospel with some success at Sleswick, a port then much frequented by merchants. Many persons, who had been baptized at Hamburg, resided there; and a number of pagans were induced to countenance Christianity in some degree. Anscarius, through the friendship of Eric, found means also to visit Sweden once more. A recommendatory letter from that prince to Olaus, king of Sweden, ensured him a favourable reception in the last-mentioned country. The

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zealous bishop arrived at Birca, where a pagan, who pretended to intimacy with the gods, opposed his designs with arguments adapted to the superstitious notions of the people. Olaus himself informed Anscarius, that it must be decided by lot, whether he should be permitted to preach Christianity in Sweden. The missionary prayed, and the lot decided in favour of his designs. The profession of the Gospel was established at Birca, and Christianity made a great progress in Sweden. Anscarius returned into Denmark, and laboured there with success. The missionaries, whom he employed, were directed by him to follow the example of St. Paul, by labouring with their own hands for bread; a very necessary practice in those poor countries.

The excellent Anscarius dies.

A. D. 865.

In the year 865, this Apostle of the north was called to his rest. He had lived six years after the union of the dioceses of Hamburg and Bremen, and had applied himself to the duties of his office, both as a governor and a preacher of the Church, with indefatigable assiduity. A terror to the proud, and a comfort to the humble, he knew how to divide the word of truth, and to give each of the flock his portion in due season. In all good works, and particularly in his care of redeeming captives, he was eminently distinguished. He erected a hospital at Bremen, in which passengers were relieved, and the sick were taken care of, which, in that rude age, was an uncommon instance of liberality and compassion. His example and authority had great influence even among those who sold captives to pagans, or kept them in slavery. They were induced by his exhortations to set the prisoners at liberty. He is said to have had the gift of miracles; and though I cannot give full credit even to the most plausible stories of this nature, which are related of him, because of the superstitious credulity and fraudulent inventions of the times, I must confess with Fleury, that if ever the gift of miracles may

be supposed to have existed after the first ages of Christianity, it may be believed, most probably, to have been vouchsafed to those, who were concerned in the first plantation of Churches *. And it should be remembered, that Sweden and Denmark were, under God, indebted to Anscarius for the first light of the Gospel. This extraordinary person, however, was by no means disposed to value himself on miraculous powers; as he appears to have been acquainted with a holy influence of a more excellent nature, 1 Cor. chap. xii. last verse. "If I had found favour with God," said he, one day, when he heard his miracles extolled, "I should beseech him to grant me one single miracle, even his grace to sanctify my nature." It is remarked of him, that he never did any thing without recommending himself first to God by prayer. A short fragment of an epistle to the bishops is the whole of his writings which I can find to be extant †. "I beg your earnest prayers to God for the growth and fruitfulness of this mission among the pagans. For, by the grace of God, the Church of Christ is now founded both in Denmark and Sweden; and the pastors discharge their office without molestation. May God Almighty make you all partakers of this work in godly charity, and joint heirs with Christ in heavenly glory!" The Centuriators have charged him with idolatry; but the only proof, which they give, is his superstitious attachment to

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* Nelson is of the same opinion. "Q. Does it seem probable, that if the conversion of infidels were attempted by men of honest and sincere minds, God would extraordinarily countenance such a design? A. 'Tis agreeable to reason to think he would, and in no way contrary to Scripture. For, as the wisdom of God is never found to be prodigal in multiplying the effects of his Almighty power, so it is never wanting to afford all necessary evidences and motives of conversion." Nelson's Festivals, p. 259.

† Crantzius. See Cent. Magd. Cent. IX. p. 324.

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relics: an evil so general, I had almost said UNIVERSAL, at that time, that it cannot fix any particular blot on the character of Anscarius. I see no proof of his having practised or encouraged image worship. It is true, that he was devoted to the See of Rome. And, in those days, how few were not so! The Centuriators in their own attachment to the prejudices of the age, in which they lived, might have found a charitable apology for those of the northern Apostle. If candour be not exercised in such circumstances, we shall scarcely be able to see, for many ages, even the existence of a Church of Christ. A Luther, firmly and decidedly resisting, and even despising the current maxims of his own age, is a rare phenomenon.

I have the satisfaction to observe, that Mosheim is, in the case of Anscarius, more candid than the Centuriators. He allows, that the labours of that missionary, and in general of the other missionaries in this century, deserve the highest commendations. If it were possible to exhibit a circumstantial account of Anscarius, most probably the justice of Mosheim's encomium on his character would be ascertained beyond the reach of contradiction. What else but the genuine love of God in Christ could have furnished the mind with such faith in Providence, perseverance in hardships, and active charity for souls?

Rembert made bishop of Bremen.

Rembert, his confidant, was appointed bishop of Bremen, by the dying words of the Apostle. He wrote the life of his predecessor, a treatise which seems to have furnished historians with the greatest part of their materials concerning Anscarius. Rembert himself presided over the Church of the north, for twenty-three years, and established their discipline and ecclesiastical consistence. He was not unworthy of the confidence of his predecessor, and lived and died an example of piety. He began to

preach among the people of Brandenburg, who hitherto had been altogether pagan, and made some progress toward their conversion. He died in 888. CENT. IX. Dies. A. D. 888.

Jeron, an English presbyter, went over to Holland, in this century, and preached the Gospel there: and, so far as appears, with faithfulness. He was crowned with martyrdom about the year 849*. Jeron, an English missionary, martyred in Holland. A. D. 849.

Patto, a Scotch abbot, was appointed bishop of Verden, by Charlemagne. The Centuriators only tell us, that he strenuously supported popish corruptions and human traditions. But Crantzius, from whom they collected this account, would have informed them also of better things†. Patto, it appears, had great success among the infidels, but was grieved to see Christian professors disgracing the faith by their vices. He faithfully rebuked them; and for his honest zeal in preaching against the sins of nominal Christians, was murdered about the year 815. Patto, a Scotch abbot, murdered. A. D. 815.

Tanes, who had succeeded Patto in the Scotch abbey, after a time left his situation, and followed his countryman into Germany, not so much with a desire of martyrdom, say the Centuriators, as of obtaining a richer benefice. Uncharitable surmise! There is too much of this leaven to be found in a work, which, in other respects, abounds in piety and industry. The same Crantzius informs us, that Tanes, in fact, laboured in conjunction with Patto, and, after a while, was appointed his successor to the See of Verden. The considerate reader will judge, whether the sufferings and hardships which Tanes and Patto had sustained among barbarians were likely to render the bishopric of Verden an enviable object of ambition? Crantzius's account of Tanes.

I know no other ground on which the propa-

* Cent. Magd. † See A. Butler, Vol. II.

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gation of the gospel may be discovered in this century. The accounts of the labours of Spanish pastors among the Mahometans, or of the sufferings of the Christians under the persecutions of the Moors, are not sufficiently authenticated.

The reader, however, has seen, in this dark century, a clear demonstration, that the Church of Christ still existed. He may now, if he please, descend with me to the ultimate point of Christian depression.

CENTURY X.

CHAP. I.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.

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THE famous annalist of the Roman Church, whose partiality to the See of Rome is notorious, has, however, the candour to own, that this was an iron age, barren of all goodness; a leaden age, abounding in all wickedness; and a dark age, remarkable above all others for the scarcity of writers, and men of learning*. "Christ was then, as it appears, in a very deep sleep, when the ship was covered with waves; and what seemed worse, when the Lord was thus asleep, there were no disciples, who by their cries, might awaken him, being themselves all fast asleep." Under an allusion by no means incongruous with the oriental and scriptural taste, this writer represents the Divine Head of the Church as having given up the Church, for its wickedness, to a judicial impenitency, which continued the longer, because there was scarcely any zealous spirits who had the charity to pray for the cause of God upon earth. I give this serious and devotional sense to Baronius, because the words will bear it, without the least violence, and the phraseology is perfectly scriptural†.

Infidel malice has with pleasure recorded the

* Baron. Annal.

† As for instance, Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? Ps. xliv. 23.

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vices and the crimes of the popes of this century. Nor is it my intention to attempt to palliate the account of their wickedness. It was as deep and as atrocious as language can paint; nor can a reasonable man desire more authentic evidence of history, than that, which the records both of civil and ecclesiastical history afford, concerning the corruption of the whole Church. One pleasing circumstance, however, occurs to the mind of a genuine Christian; which is, that all this was predicted. The Book of the Revelation may justly be called a prophetic history of these transactions, and the truth of Scripture is vindicated by events of all others the most disagreeable to a pious mind.

What materials then appear for the history of the real Church? The propagation of the Gospel among the pagan nations, and the review of some writers of this century, form the principal materials, and shall be the subjects of two distinct chapters. But the general description of the situation of the Church, can be little else than a very succinct enumeration of the means made use of to oppose the progress of popery.

A council at Frankfort.

A. D. 909.

The decrees of the council of Frankfort against image-worship had still some influence in Germany, France, and England. In the year 909, a council was held at Trosle, a village near Soissons in France, in which they expressed their sentiments of Christian faith and practice, without any mixture of doctrine that was peculiarly popish. Many Churches still had the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue. The monks took much pains in our island to erect an independent dominion on the ruin of the secular clergy. This scheme, equally destructive of civil and clerical authority, met, however, with a vigorous, and, in a great measure, a successful resistance; and the celibacy of the clergy was strongly opposed. Even the doctrine of transubstantiation itself, the favourite child of Pascasius

Radbert, was still denied by many, and could not as yet gain a firm and legal establishment in Europe. Alfric, in England, whose homily for Easter used to be read in the Churches, undertook to prove, that the elements were the body and blood of Christ, not corporeally, but spiritually. In an epistle he asserts, that this sacrifice is not made his body, in which he suffered for us, nor his blood, which he shed for us, but is spiritually made his body and blood, as was the case with the manna which rained from heaven, and with the water which flowed from the rock. Opposition was also made by kings and councils to the authority of the pope. One of the most remarkable instances of this kind took place in the council of Rheims, which deposed a bishop without the consent of the pope. The story is tedious and uninteresting. I have looked over the acts of the synod, which are circumstantially detailed by the Centuriators in their history of this century; and a few words of the discourses of Arnulph, bishop of Orleans, the president, may deserve to be distinctly quoted*. "O deplorable Rome, who in the days of our forefathers producedst so many burning and shining lights, thou had brought forth, in our times, only dismal darkness, worthy of the detestation of posterity: What shall we do, or what council shall we take? The Gospel tells us of a barren fig-tree, and of the divine patience exercised toward it. Let us bear with our primates as long as we can; and, in the mean time, seek for spiritual food, where it is to be found. Certainly there are some in this holy assembly, who can testify, that in Belgium and Germany, both which are near us, there may be found real

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* Bishop Newton, in his 3d Vol. p. 161, on the prophecies, of whom I have made some use in a few foregoing sentences, assigns the words to Gerbert, of Rheims. The acts of the synod which I have mentioned show his mistake; they expressly ascribe them to Arnulphus.

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pastors and eminent men in religion. Far better would it be, if the animosities of kings did not prevent that we should seek, in those parts, for the judgment of bishops, than in that venal city, which weighs all decrees by the quantity of money.—What think you, reverend fathers, of this man, the pope, placed on a lofty throne, shining in purple and gold? whom do you account him? If destitute of love, and puffed up with the pride of knowledge only, he is Antichrist sitting in the temple of God*."

It is always a pleasing speculation to a thinking mind, to observe the ebullitions of good sense and a vigorous understanding, exerted in disadvantageous circumstances. It should be still more pleasing to observe them, when they are under the conduct of humble piety, as it may be presumed was the case in this instance of Arnulphus. We see here even Luther and Cranmer in embryo. This zealous and intelligent Frenchman laments, that the kings of the earth were committing fornication with the Roman harlot, and giving their power to support her grandeur. He cast his eyes toward the Netherlands and Germany, which appear to have had, at that time, a degree of light and purity unknown at Rome: he eagerly wishes to oppose this light and purity to the darkness and the profligacy of Rome. Like Luther, he is fearful of throwing all things into confusion by hasty and precipitate methods: and, like Cranmer, in the case of Henry VIII.'s divorce, he wishes to appeal to the unprejudiced judgment of men more learned, and more virtuous, than any to be found at Rome, against the scandalous oppressions of that venal city. That which Arnulphus conceived so judiciously, in an age the most unfavourable to reformation, Luther in Germany, and Cranmer in England, afterward effected. It is not, however, to be supposed, that even those magnanimous struggles for Christian light and liberty were in vain. The

* 2 Thess. ii.

Spirit of God was evidently still with the recent churches of Germany and the north; and France itself was by no means destitute of men who feared God, and served him in the Gospel of his Son. CENT. X.

There is an ultimate point of depression in morals, below which the common sense of mankind and the interests of society will not permit the scandalous profligacy of governors, whether secular or ecclesiastic, to descend. The Church of Rome had sunk to this point in the present century. Not only moral virtue itself, but even the appearance of it, was lost in the metropolis: and the Church, now trampled on by the most worthless prelates, and immersed in profaneness, sensuality, and lewdness, called for the healing aid of the civil magistrate. Otho I. emperor of Germany, came to Rome: and, by the united powers of the civil and the military sword, reduced that capital into some degree of order and decorum. He put an end to the irregular and infamous customs of intruding into the popedom; and confirmed to himself and his successors the right of choosing the supreme pontiff in future. The consequence was, that a greater degree of moral decorum began to prevail in the papacy, though matter of fact evinces but too plainly, that religious principle was still as much wanting as ever. The effect of Otho's regulations was, that the popes exchanged the vices of the rake and the debauchee, for those of the ambitious politician and the hypocrite; and gradually recovered, by a prudent conduct, the domineering ascendancy, which had been lost by vicious excesses. But this did not begin to take place till the latter end of the eleventh century. If a very moderate degree of Christian knowledge had obtained, during Otho's time, in the Christian world, the farce of St. Peter's dominion at Rome by his successors, would have been at an end. But there arose no Claudius of Turin in this century. The little specimen of the eloquence of Arnulphus, which has been mentioned,

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was the only effort I can find, which was made to stem the torrent of Roman tyranny. The whole western world, with Otho at its head, an emperor of upright intentions, and of shining endowments, agreed to reverence that See as supreme, which had laboured as it were, by the most infamous practices, to degrade itself, and to convince mankind, that it could not possibly be of divine appointment. The popes were rebuked, condemned, and punished; but the popedom was reverenced as much as ever. God had put in the hearts of princes to fulfil his will; and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the "Beast," until the words of God should be fulfilled*. The Roman prelates, convinced of the necessity of more caution and decorum in the use of their power, recovered by political artifice what they had lost, and became, in the issue, more terrible and more pernicious in the exercise of their power than ever. The neglect of so favourable an opportunity for emancipating the Church from religious slavery, is the highest proof of the extreme ignorance of these times, and deserved to be noticed.

This was an age of great political regulations. The choice of the German emperor was restricted to certain electors, with whom it continues to the present time. The empire had, indeed, been entirely separated from the French monarchy, in the latter end of the foregoing century. But, in this, the great Otho more firmly fixed the imperial crown, in the name and nation of Germany. He himself was sprung from the dukes of Saxony; and deserved much of all Europe for his memorable victory over the Turks, by which the same restraint was laid on their inroads into Germany, as had been laid in France on the inroads of the Saracens into that kingdom, by the victorious arms of Charles Martel, the grandfather of Charlemagne. The Turks were

* Rev. xvii. 17.

a fierce and valiant nation, who inhabited the coast of the Caspian sea, and who were let loose on mankind as a just providential scourge, on account of the contempt of divine truth, and the overflowing torrent of iniquity which had pervaded Christendom. They gradually superseded the Saracens, and seized their power and empire; but no great alteration took place in the civil situation of the east or the west on that account. For the Turks universally embraced Mahometanism, the religion of the vanquished; and with that the hatred of the Saracens to the Christian name; nor have they to this day acquired either politeness or science to such a degree as might mitigate their ferocity. CENT. X.

In all this disastrous period, I find scarcely any prince, except Otho, actuated with a spirit of religious zeal: indeed, his two successors of the same name, inherited some portion of his talents and virtues. The efforts of Otho to purify the Church, to promote learning, to erect bishoprics, to endow churches and to propagate the Gospel among the barbarous nations were highly laudable. And so steady and sincere were his exertions of this nature, and so amiable was his private life, that I cannot but hope, that he was himself a real Christian. His empress, Adelaide, was no less remarkable for her zeal and liberality. But I scarcely need to say, that the reigning ignorance, superstition, and wickedness defeated, or abused their well-meant designs; those alone excepted, which regarded the propagation of the Gospel among the pagans.

In the west the Normans, in the east the Turks, committed the most dreadful outrages on the Church. In our own island I find nothing, in all this period, but ignorance, superstition, and the ravages of northern barbarians. The state of France was not much different: the latter kings of the house of Charlemagne were dwindled into ciphers; and, toward the close of the century, the third race of

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French kings began in the person of Hugh Capet. This prince was himself by no means so renowned as Clovis and Charlemagne, the heads of the first and second race; but his posterity remained on the throne for a much longer series of years than that of the two former, though the name of Capet was almost forgotten in the world. It has, however, been rendered familiar to our ears of late, by a series of transactions, which have issued in the ruin of that house, and in the exhibition of scenes, which have equally outraged every principle of religion, honour, and humanity.

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THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN THIS CENTURY.

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THE Hungarians had received some ideas of Christianity in the time of Charlemagne. But, on his decease, they relapsed into the idolatries of their fathers, and the Christian name was almost extinguished among them. Nor is it probable, that they had ever been much instructed in the real Gospel of Christ. But toward the middle of this century, two Hungarian chiefs, whose governments lay on the banks of the Danube, made profession of Christianity; and were baptized at Constantinople. These two leaders were called Bologudes and Gylas. The former soon apostatized: the latter persevered; received instruction from Hierotheus, a bishop, who had accompanied him from Constantinople; and encouraged the labours of the same bishop among his subjects. The effects proved salutary to the Hungarian nation: Sarolta, the daughter of Gylas, was given in marriage to Geysa, the chief prince of Hungary. She prevailed on her husband to receive

Christianity, and the Gospel was once more introduced into a country through the zealous piety of a woman. Geysa, however, still retained much inclination to the idolatry of his fathers, though his conversations with Christian captives and missionaries made a strong impression on his mind: but he was prevented from apostatizing, by the zeal and authority of Adalbert, archbishop of Prague, who visited Hungary toward the conclusion of this century. Whether the King's conversion was real or nominal, the most salutary consequences attended the reception of the Gospel by his subjects. Humanity, peace and civilization began to flourish among a people hitherto fierce and barbarous in the extreme. Stephen, the son of Geysa, was baptized by Adalbert; and became a more decisive defender of the faith than his father had been. Under Stephen, Hungary was almost wholly evangelized; and nothing was omitted by this zealous prince to establish Christianity throughout his dominions. There is every reason to believe that many real conversions took place, though I can give no particular account of them. CENT. X.

But Adalbert has been mentioned; and it will be proper to give the reader a short sketch of the life of that extraordinary personage*. He was born in 956, and ordained by Diethmar, archbishop of Prague. He beheld this same archbishop dying in terrible agonies of conscience, on account of his neglect of pastoral duty, and his secular avarice. Adalbert was appointed his successor; but with so little satisfaction to himself, that he was never seen to smile afterwards. Being asked the reason, he said, "it is an easy thing to wear a mitre and a cross, but an awful thing to give an account of a bishopric before the Judge of quick and dead." Bohemia, the scene of his diocese, was covered with idolatry: there were Adalbert born. A. D. 956.

* Alban Butler's Saints lives. Vol. IV.

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Christians, indeed, in that country, but chiefly nominal ones. In vain did the pious archbishop endeavour to reform the evils and abuses. The people undesignedly gave the noblest testimony to his sincerity, when they observed, that it was impossible for him and them to have communion with each other, because of the perfect opposition of life and conversation. Adalbert sighing over the wretched objects of his charge, and still willing to labour in the best of causes, travelled as a missionary into Poland, and planted the Gospel in Dantzic. Here his labours seem to have been crowned with good success. In visiting a small island he was knocked down with the oar of a boat: however, recovering himself, he made his escape, rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, and with his fellow-labourers quitted the place. Indeed he was forced to flee for his life; and, at length, was murdered by barbarians in Lithuania; or, as some think, in Prussia, about the year 997. Siggo, a pagan priest, was the principal instrument of his death. He is commonly styled the apostle of Prussia*, though he only evangelized the city of Dantzic, which is in the neighbourhood of that country. Such was Adalbert;—and so small is the account transmitted to us, of one of the wisest and best of men, whom God had raised up for the instruction of the species,—a man willing to labour and to suffer for Christ!

Murdered by barbarians.

A. D. 997.

Wolfang bishop of Ratisbon.

Wolfang, bishop of Ratisbon, may properly accompany Adalbert, who had received his bishopric of Prague, in consequence of Wolfang's having vacated part of his diocese for that purpose. The latter was a native of Suabia, and was brought up at a school in Wurtzburg. His experience gave him an opportunity of seeing, that professors of wisdom may even be greater slaves to pride and

* Mosheim, Cent. XI. Chap. I.

envy than the illiterate. Wearied with the view of scholastic strifes, he sighed for solitude, but was engaged to attend Henry, his friend, to Triers, who was there chosen archbishop. Wolfang there taught children, and was dean of a community of ecclesiastics. In 972, he went to preach in Hungary, but had no great success. He was afterwards appointed bishop of Ratisbon: there he reformed the clergy, and was indefatigable in preaching twenty-two years. Henry, duke of Bavaria, placed under him his four children, Henry, afterwards emperor,—Gisela, queen of Hungary,—Bruno, bishop of Augsburg,—and Brigit, abbess of Ratisbon, all eminent characters. Wolfang died in 994*.

Preaches in Hungary. A. D. 972.

Dies. A. D. 994.

The plantation of the Gospel in Brandenburg was begun by the zeal and victorious arms of Charlemagne; but was not completed, in a national sense, till the year 928, under Henry the Fowler, the predecessor of Otho I. †

The Gospel planted in Brandenburg. A. D. 928.

The labours of Gerard, bishop of Toul in Germany, also deserve to be mentioned. He was himself an eminent preacher; and often commissioned zealous pastors to preach in country parishes. He cultivated learning among his disciples; but at the same time took care, so far as it lay in his power, that they should apply themselves to devotion. That he would be very earnest in these pious efforts will admit of no doubt, if it be true, that he declared, that he found more delight in heavenly exercises during one moment, than a worldly soul finds in worldly pleasures for a thousand years ‡.

Gerard of Toul labours in Germany.

If we look into Scandinavia, we find that the work of God, which had begun so prosperously in the last century, by the labours of Anscarius, had

* Butler, X.

† Memoirs of the house of Brandenburg, by the late king of Prussia.

‡ Butler, IV.

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met with a severe check in Denmark, whose king, Gormo the 3d *, laboured to extirpate the Gospel there entirely. His queen Tyra, however, openly professed it, and gave it all the support which she was enabled to do, under great disadvantages. But the power and influence of the king prevailed, and most of his subjects returned to idolatry. At length Henry I. called the Fowler, the predecessor of the great Otho, led an army into Denmark; and, through the terror of his arms, obliged Gormo to promise submission to the commands of the emperor. Under the protection of this last prince, Unni, then archbishop of Hamburg, with some faithful labourers, came into Denmark, and brought over many to the profession of divine truth; but Gormo himself remained inflexible. Harald, the son of Gormo, however, received the word with respect: for his mother Tyra by her instructions had, at least, removed all prejudice from his mind. Unni, with the consent of Gormo, visited the islands, and formed Christian churches among them. The king himself was allowed by his conqueror Henry, to choose, whether he would receive Christianity, or reject it; but was prohibited from persecuting the faith, in his dominions: and thus, by a singular concurrence of circumstances, a sovereign prince was, by a foreign power, prevented from committing that evil among his subjects, to which his own inclinations would have led him. I cannot vindicate the imperious proceedings of Henry; the labours of Unni were, however, highly laudable, and Providence smiled on his benevolent views in propagating truth and holiness.

Unni, animated with success, determined to follow the pattern of Anscarius, and to visit the kingdom of Sweden. He entered the Baltic, and arrived at Birca: there he found that the Gospel had been

* Centuriat. Cent. X. Mosheim, Cent. X. C. 1.

extinct: for seventy years, no bishop had appeared among them, except Rembert, the successor of Anscarius. There probably were, however, some souls then alive, who had heard the Gospel with joy in former times: and it pleased God to give large success to the ministry of Unni. He fixed the Gospel in Sweden, and planted it even in the remoter parts of that northern region. At length, he finished his glorious course at Birca, in the year 936. The savage disposition of the princes, and the confusion of the times, had tended to obliterate the traces of Anscarius's labours: but, at length, Eric, the eighth king of Sweden, and still more his son and successor, Olaus the second, favoured the propagation of the Gospel.

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Unni, Archbishop of Hamburgh, fixed the Gospel in Sweden; and dies, A. D. 936.

The former of these princes requested the archbishop of Bremen to supply his kingdom with missionaries. The archbishop sent him two persons of knowledge, piety, and integrity, Adalvard and Stephen. They laboured with much success for a time; but the natural enmity of depraved mankind will exert itself against true piety, whatever be the form of government under which men live. The nobles of Sweden were enraged to find their licentiousness of manners so restrained; and they commenced a religious persecution against both the missionaries and the king. The former were beaten with rods, and expelled from Upsal: the latter was murdered on account of his piety. His son and successor Olaus was not discouraged from cherishing Christianity; and his zeal and piety were crowned with success*.

Thus were Sweden and Denmark, after a variety of changes, reduced into subjection to the form, and, no doubt, many individuals to the power, of the Gospel. In the latter country, after the death of Henry I. the inhabitants refused to pay tribute

* Cent. Magd. Cent. X.

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to Otho the Great his successor. This monarch obliged them to submit; and required Harald, the son and successor of Gormo, to receive Christian baptism. All that we know of this prince, inclines me to believe, that there was no relunctance on his part. He was baptized, together with his wife and little son, whose name had been Sueno; and, in honour of the emperor, he was now called Suen-Otho. Harald, during his whole life, took every wise and salutary method to propagate divine truth among his subjects, and to restrain vice and immorality. Nor is it much to be doubted, that he would instruct his son Suen-Otho to act in the same manner; and labour to impress on his mind the power of that divine religion, which he himself seems to have felt. Be that as it may, Suen-Otho formed a junction with the chiefs of the country, who were offended at the pious zeal of Harald: in consequence of which, the latter was murdered: and Suen-Otho, renouncing even the name, which had been imposed on him, persecuted the Christians with great cruelty; and, for a time, gave a predominancy to the pagan interest in his dominions. It is remarkable, however, that, like another Manasseh, in his affliction he knew that the Lord was God. Being expelled from his throne, and forced to live in exile among the Scots, he was induced to remember the lessons of his childhood: he repented of his crimes; and, being restored to his throne, like the same Manasseh, he laboured to destroy the idolatry which he had supported, and, in the latter part of his life, trode in the steps of his father.

The Gospel carried into Norway by an English missionary, A. D. 912.

In this century, the light of the Gospel penetrated into Norway*. About the year 912, an English missionary, named Bernard, attempted to plant the doctrine of Christ in this barbarous region. Olaus, the king, listened to his discourses,

* Centuriat. Cent. X. Mosheim, Cent. X. Chap. I.

and professed himself to be a convert; but he still attended to omens and Gentile superstitions. All the arguments of Bernard were ineffectual to cure him of his inveterate propensities; whence he was more a disgrace than an ornament to his profession. About the year 933, another king, called Hagen, who had been educated among the English, employed certain missionaries of that nation to instruct his subjects. But the Norwegians persisted in their idolatry; and his successor Graufeldt pursued the same plan, but without effect. Several successive princes laboured in the same cause, with the same ill success. The form of a government established in any country, seems from experience to have been of no capital moment, in regard to the success of Christian missions. Despotism, limited monarchy, and republicanism, have each been serviceable or detrimental in the cause; and to associate strongly any one of these forms with the progress of the Gospel, is, perhaps, forming an imagination of an alliance between Church and state that has no solid foundation in nature. We see, in the case before us, that a republican form would have proved destructive to the best of causes. It is to the effusion of the Holy Spirit, directing subordinate causes, and, independently of mere human politics, that the success of the Gospel is ever to be ascribed. At length, Haco, king of Norway, being driven from his throne, on account of his tyrannical government, having himself also persecuted the Christians in Norway, and having put himself under the protection of that same Harald of Denmark, whom we have already celebrated, became a patron of Christianity among his people. For Harald both instructed him in the nature of Christianity, and restored him to his dominions. Haco, humbled and enlightened, recommended the Gospel in an assembly of the people, in the year 945. His zeal and solemnity were very striking;

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Other missionaries, A. D. 933.

A. D. 945.

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but the fierce and barbarous people were not much moved; and the remembrance of his former ill conduct would naturally prejudice their minds against his arguments. Olaus, who reigned some time after, was the most successful of all the Norwegian princes in recommending Christianity. At length, Swein, king of Denmark, having made himself master of Norway, obliged his subjects universally to renounce their gods, and profess the Gospel. Doubtless many compulsory methods were used by several, probably by all these princes, by no means agreeable to the genius of the Gospel. Their intentions, however, seem laudable; and at least the zealous labours of the missionaries deserve to be noticed. Among these, Guthebald, an English pastor, was most eminent. The idol Thor was dragged from its place, and publicly burnt in the sight of its worshippers. In fact, Norway, in the form of its religion, became Christian throughout. The Orkney Islands, then subject to the Norwegian crown, received the light of the Gospel, which, in some degree, penetrated also into Iceland and Greenland; and, in this century, the triumph of Christianity was complete throughout all Scandinavia.

Labours of Adelbert.

The labours of Adelbert, the first archbishop of Magdeburg, deserve to be mentioned in this place. The Rugi, about the year 960, entreated the emperor Otho I. to send them a Christian bishop. This people lived in Pomerania, between the Oder and the Wipper, and in the isle of Rugen in the Baltic. The town of Rugenwald still bears their name. They were a remarkably savage race, and had a famous temple in Rugen. Certain monks of the mission-seminary of new Corbie, had formerly laboured with success, in various provinces of the Sclavi or Sclavonians, and in the whole isle of Rugen, the Rugi being a tribe of the Sclavi. An oratory was erected in the isle, in honour of Christ, and in memory of St. Vitus, patron of new Corbie.

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But the savage people soon relapsed; and making Vitus the chief of their gods, erected to him a temple and idol with sacrifices, permitting no merchant to buy or sell there who did not first give some offering for their sacrifices, or for the temple of their god, whom they now called Swantewith. "Thus," says Helmodus, "the man whom we confess a martyr and servant of Christ, they adore as god, a creature for the Creator; nor is there any nation, who so much abhors Christians, especially pastors." A memorable caution for teachers, to beware lest their instructions of the heathen may only lead them from one species of idolatry to another. However, at their desire, Otho I. sent Adelbert to the isle. But the people were hardened: several of his fellow-preachers were murdered, though he himself escaped. This fruitless mission was in 961. Adelbert was afterwards, in 970, appointed archbishop of Magdeburg, where Adelaide the empress, and widow of Otho I. passed the greatest part of her time, and gave herself up very much to his directions: she had gone through a great variety of prosperity and adversity, and was very pious and exemplary. Adelbert was an instrument of converting great numbers of the Sclavi: he supplied his diocese with able pastors for the new converts, and died in 982, having very laudably ruled the Church for twelve years *.

Mission, A. D. 961.

Adelbert dies, A. D. 982.

In the preceding century, Rollo, a Norwegian pirate, at the head of a valiant and lawless band of soldiers, who are commonly called Normans, invaded and ravaged France. But in the year 912, Charles the Simple, a monarch ill calculated to withstand so powerful an enemy, purchased a peace, by investing Rollo with the dukedom of Normandy, and by giving him his daughter Gisela in marriage, on condition that he should embrace Christianity. All religions were equally indifferent to Rollo and his

Rollo professes the Christian religion, A. D. 912.

* Butler, XII.

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followers: they therefore professed the Gospel without the least hesitation. It seemed proper to notice this event, as introducing the famous line of Norman dukes into France, whose history, in process of time, involves so much both of French and English history. As for the rest, I know of no evidence of an effusion of the Divine Spirit which attended their reception of Christianity. The Normans, however, became gradually better members of society; and at length began to patronise, in some form or other, something that bore the appearance of more serious religion.

While the nations, who had long enjoyed the forms of true religion, were slumbering in superstitions, or wallowing in gross wickedness, the Head of the Church, in his providence, still reserved to himself a GODLY SEED; and, by their labours, extended the pale of the Gospel. Poland had hitherto remained in the thickest night of ignorance, and both an inland situation and a barbarous neighbourhood seemed to exclude it from the light of divine truth. Some Poles, however, travelling into Bohemia * and Moravia, on account of business, were struck with what they heard concerning Christianity: they listened to the ministry of the Word of God, and received it gladly. Returning home, they every where recommended to their countrymen the grace of the Gospel. Moreover, foreigners often visiting Poland, on account of trade, preached Christ, as they were able, to the Poles. Something divinely excellent appeared to be in Christianity; and the happy infection spread from heart to heart. It reached, at length, Micislaus, the king or duke of Poland; who divorced his seven wives, with whom he had cohabited, and married Dambrouca, the daughter of Boleslaus, the duke of Bohemia. He was baptized in the year 965; and, by the pious and charitable

The king of Poland baptized, A. D. 965.

* Cent. Magd.

instructions of his new spouse, was induced to exert his authority in the propagation of the Gospel through his dominions: in fine, Poland became a Christian nation; nor is it probable that this was a mere outward profession: that it was so in certain respects, there is no doubt; but nevertheless, the circumstances of the narrative carry the appearance of something truly divine. Nor is that true, which Mosheim * asserts, that an inward change of affections and principles was far from being an object of attention in this barbarous age. It seems most probable, that it was an object of attention in the missionaries, and in those who zealously received them. We have seen, in several instances, an evidence of zeal in preaching, and a constancy in suffering, which can scarcely be explained on any other principle than that of godly sincerity. And we have lived to see a refined age as indifferent concerning an inward change as any barbarous period whatever.

In the year 955, Olga, the queen of Russia, sailed from Kiow to Constantinople, and received baptism, together with her attendants. On her return, she persevered in the Christian religion, but could not prevail on her family and subjects, to receive the same: the Greek missionaries, however, laboured still, and gradually succeeded †. At length Wolodomir, her grandson, in the year 961, married Anna, sister of the emperor Basil, who, by her zealous importunity, prevailed on her spouse to receive Christianity. He was baptized in the year 987; and, from that time, Russia received a Christian establishment, and has ever since considered herself as a daughter of the Greek Church.

The queen of Russia sails to Constantinople, and is there baptized, A. D. 955.

Russia becomes Christian, A. D. 987.

Ulric, son of count Hucbald, born in 893, was placed at Augsburg under the care of Adalberon, bishop of that city. He was made, at length, bishop of Augsburg, by the emperor, Henry the

* Chap. I. Cent. X. † Gibbon, Vol. V.

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Fowler. He comforted his people, who had been plundered by the Hungarians: he avoided the court: he kept close to his flock, and was equally renowned for devotion, and for pastoral labours. He died about 973.

Ulric, bishop of Augsburg, laboured in his diocese for 50 years: dies, A. D. 973.

Thus, in an age of proverbial darkness, that illustrious prophecy continued to receive its accomplishment; "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers *." The regular and civilized governments in the world sustained such dreadful calamities from the irruption of pagan nations, on all sides, that their encouragement of Christian missions was equally humane and prudential. The precepts of the Gospel only were found effectual to meliorate the dispositions of barbarians; and, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, no doubt, this was the happy effect on the minds of many.—But, it will still be said, "the conversion of a great number was only nominal, and compulsory methods were employed, which are by no means adapted to the genius of the Gospel." It must be allowed, that the latter of these assertions is strictly true, and the former, in many instances, but by no means in all. The efforts of the tenth and the three preceding centuries, to extend Christianity, had their blemishes, which have been malignantly insisted on, and even exaggerated by modern writers. Defective, however, as these efforts were, they form the principal glory of those times; and, partly by evident proofs and a detail of circumstances, and partly by analogy and the nature of things, they appear to have been attended with the effusion of the Divine Spirit, the genuine conversion of numbers, and the improvement of human society. The virtues of many at least, of the missionaries, are above any encomium which I can give; though they were born in rude ages, and are consigned to contempt

* Isaiah xlix.

and oblivion by polite historians, who lavish all their praises on heroes and politicians. If, however, the labours of an obscure individual may attract the attention of the public, the names of Boniface, Anscarius, Adelbert, Unni, and others of the same class, shall be honoured among men, and the work of propagating the Gospel shall appear laudable in an extreme degree. It must appear so to all, who desire that the name of Jesus should be honoured through the earth, and that the power of his grace should be felt in every place, and in every heart. But to what lengths will not scepticism proceed? It has even been advanced, that the attempt to propagate Christianity, without the consent of the government established in every country, is unlawful in its nature. A position so injurious to the character of many of the best and wisest men, whom it behoves us to celebrate in this history, and so conveniently favourable to the selfish, avaricious, indolent spirit of nominal Christians, will deserve to be investigated and exposed in its genuine colours.

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CHAP. III.

AN APOLOGY FOR CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

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THE commission which our Saviour gave to his Apostles, a little before his ascension, forms of itself the strongest apology for the practice of Christian missionaries in all ages. "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world *."

* Matthew xxviii. 19, 20.

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It cannot be justly said, that this commission of evangelizing all nations is restricted to the Apostles, because He, who gave these directions, declares, He will always be with those who obey them to the end of the world. The commission is then as much in force at this day, as it was at the first age of Christianity; and will continue in force till time shall be no more. The promise of divine support, to encourage the missionaries in the prosecution of a work so arduous and so difficult, extends to all ages, and would be perfectly inapplicable to those ages, if any such there were, which should have no right to propagate the Gospel.

Questions concerning missions.

"Is every person then, calling himself a Christian, authorized to preach the Gospel among the heathen nations?" Not so: nor is every person called a Christian authorized to preach in Christian countries. Certain qualifications and endowments, and above all, the real and genuine influence of the Holy Spirit, are necessary for this purpose. To define and to ascertain these in particular cases, enter not into the subject before us. Suffice it to say, that, however in point of prudence and expediency, it be proper to procure, if practicable, the consent and concurrence of the government of the country, which is the object of the mission, such consent and concurrence is not necessary as a legitimate qualification of a missionary, who should undertake to evangelize pagan countries. Our Lord well knew that such consent was not attainable in any country under heaven at the time in which he gave this commission. He mentions no such condition, nor did the Apostles conceive the necessity of such a license. It is well known, on the contrary, that they persisted in their mission, not only without, but also against the express prohibitions of all governments, whether Jewish or Gentile. The nature and reasonableness of Christianity itself is such, that, wherever it is fairly exhibited, in con-

nexion with its proper proofs and evidences, those, who hear it, are bound in conscience to obey it, magistrates as well as others; and, as we have seen, the magistrate himself not only may, but ought to promote it, for the good of society *. CENT. X.

"But the Apostles wrought miracles; and therefore, though they had a right to propagate Christianity, others who do not so, have no right to preach, except with the consent of the government." It does not appear, that the evidence of their commission rested wholly on miracles, though it must be confessed these formed a striking part of it, and were afforded by Divine Providence, in order to facilitate the progress of the then infant religion. But if, what no serious Christian will deny, there is an internal evidence in the Gospel itself, which ought to weigh with every reasonable mind, abstracted from any thing miraculous, it will be the duty of every one to receive it, when fairly proposed; and the obedience due to divine revelation is binding not only on those who hear it from one who works miracles, but also on those who hear it from one who brings unexceptionable testimonies of miracles having been wrought by others, in attestation of Christianity. Whoever attentively reads the history of the Acts of the Apostles, and the historical parts of the Epistles, will find, that all ministers, regularly ordained,—for the case of self-ordained ministers I do not here consider,—thought it their duty to preach the word every where, whether they could work miracles or not. The miraculous powers were an adventitious circumstance; of great importance, indeed, in the opening of Christianity; but if the stress of an evangelical commission to the heathen had ever been meant to be laid upon it, it is surprising that this condition should never be mentioned in the sacred volume: it is not to be

* See Chap. XVII. Vol. II.

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conceived, that the numberles missionaries in the apostolic age should all have been ignorant of it. Besides, with the cessation of miracles, the work of promulgation must have probably ceased; whereas, it appears, that in the succeeding centuries, even to the tenth, missionaries still laboured; and, in a greater or less degree, the work prospered in their hand.

If these reflections have any weight, they show that it has been inconsiderately asserted, that civil governments alone have a right to determine, whether Christian missionaries shall preach the Gospel or not within their dominions. I have proved, I think, that they have a right to establish Christianity; but it does not follow that they have a right to exclude it. Right and wrong, in this case, have a higher foundation than human politics. Trajan might think himself justified in persecuting Christians, because they transgressed the Roman laws, which forbade the introduction of foreign religions. But Trajan ought to have known, that there is an authority in religion superior to any human constitutions whatever.

Though the authority of Scripture, the practice of the apostolic age, and the labours of the best and wisest of their successors, from age to age, seem, taken together, to form a sufficient apology for Christian missions at this day, yet we need not fear, in this cause, to appeal to the common sense of mankind. If a whole nation were afflicted with a pestilential disease, and a foreigner were in possession of a medicine, that might probably save many of their lives, it might be prudent, no doubt, for that foreigner to obtain an express license, if practicable, from the government, for affording medical aid to its subjects. But will any man say, that it would be wrong in him to endeavour to heal the diseased, if he had an opportunity, and had the benevolence to attempt it, though he had no formal

sanction from the magistrate? To promote the welfare of our neighbours, is, next to our duty to God, the most essential ingredient in the character of a good man. Is the express consent of the legislature necessary, antecedently to every office of mercy and humanity?—It is not necessary to say, that the propagation of the Gospel is the most salutary and the most important of all works of charity. What then ought to be thought of him who would leave to the discretion of the magistrate the great office of labouring to win souls; and would charge with sin an employment of all others the most beneficent to mankind? CENT. X.

"Is not this to teach rebellion against lawful authority, and to countenance an undue interference with foreign governments?" Could this be proved, I should not know how to apologize for missionaries. For I scarcely know any thing more diametrically opposite to the genius of the Gospel than such a conduct. Let it be carefully observed, that our argument goes no farther than to justify a PACIFIC attempt to teach Christianity throughout the Globe, "If they persecute you in one city, flee ye into another," is the rule of the Divine Author of Christianity. A missionary must be prepared to endure, not to inflict evil: he may expect opposition, and even death itself. He must patiently sustain his lot: he must forego not only all violence in attempting to propagate Christianity, but also all artifice and secular intrigues: he must not only forbear to disturb the government of the country, and to weaken mens attachment to it, but he must do more: he must teach obedience to it, as an essential branch of Christianity itself, and an obedience too, "not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." If his word is not received in one place, he must make experiment of another, in dependence on Divine Providence and grace. Meekness, patience, submission to civil authority must attend him in

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every step. Such were the apostolic missionaries; such in a good degree were the missionaries of the dark ages, which we are reviewing. And I am apt to think, that those, who object to missions in general, have had their eye on the political craft of the Jesuits, or the furious factions of enthusiasts. For I can scarcely believe we are grown so totally callous to every Christian sensation, as deliberately to condemn all missions conducted in the true spirit of the Gospel.

Do we expect that, according to numerous prophecies, the kingdom of Christ shall spread through all nations? And are no means to be employed to promote it?—Shall we complain of the want of universality in the best religion, and discourage every attempt to effect that universality? With what an ill grace do objectors to the propagation of the Gospel make such complaints? Are human efforts concerned in all other works of Divine Providence, and are they in this, the most important of all, to be excluded? Are we to sit still, and expect some sudden and miraculous providential interposition, and is this the only instance, in which Socinians, and men who call themselves rational Christians, will use no rational methods, in order to produce the most desirable effects? Or have we learned to despise the importance of Christianity itself, and do we think that the present comfort and future felicity of mankind are no way connected with the subject before us?

I propose these few questions, leaving the resolution of them to the consciences of those, who have had it in their power to encourage Christian missions in our times, and who have opposed them. To have been particularly active in extending the Redeemer's kingdom forms no part of the glory of this country. Denmark, a poor impotent government, compared with our's, has, it is well known, effected in this way what may cause Britons to

blush, and what should stir us up to virtuous emulation. With every advantage in our hands, for the propagation of the Gospel, we have done very little indeed, and the annals of the several dark ages we have reviewed, have exhibited a spirit of adventurous charity unknown to those, who now boast themselves as the most enlightened and the most philosophic of mankind. CENT. X.

CHAP. IV.

WRITERS AND EMINENT MEN IN THIS CENTURY.

In a dearth so excessive, there are few, who deserve to be noticed either for knowledge or for piety; and fewer still for both. My chief view, in this chapter, is to give the reader an idea of the state of true religion in these times; nor will the picture here exhibited be materially erroneous, though it could be proved, that Theophylact, one of the authors whom I shall quote, belonged to the next century, as Mosheim thinks. For the spirit and taste of the tenth and eleventh centuries are so similar, that what illustrates the one will illustrate the other. The very toleration of the Roman popedom itself, after the detection of its flagitiousness before all the world, evinces the uncommonly low condition of Christian knowledge in this age; proofs, however, will appear, that the Spirit of God had not forsaken the Church, and that there were those who reverenced and felt the power of her doctrines. CHAP. IV.

It is not in Rome, but in the more recent Churches, that this power appears. Whether it was practically exemplified by Bruno, archbishop

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of Cologne; in Germany, is not very evident. But, in knowledge and learning, he was very eminent.

Character of Bruno.

He was brother to Otho I. and by the desire of the people of Cologne, was fixed by that great prince in the archbishopric. We must not expect much regard to ecclesiastical discipline in these times; and therefore are not to be surprised, that a prince so religious as Otho was, should invest his relation also with the civil power of a dukedom. Bruno is remarked, however, to have been among the first, who united offices so discordant in the same person*. This was to secularize the Church, and Cologne continues in a similar state to this day. Bruno was nevertheless an assiduous promoter of religion. Normans, Danes, and various others, who travelled in his province, he brought over to the profession of Christianity. He restrained the luxury both of clergy and people: and was himself a shining example of modest and frugal manners. He died about the year 965.

His death, A. D. 965.

Unni, a far more decided character, has been already celebrated. As archbishop of Hamburg, he acted with a vigour and a piety worthy the importance of that See. He was highly reverenced by the German emperors of his time; and that a person so opulent should choose to labour as a missionary in such countries as Denmark and Sweden, argues a zeal of no common degree. He died at Stockholm in 936†.

Death of Unni, A. D. 936.

By the advice of Adolvard, bishop of Verden, Adeldagus, who had discharged some petty office in the Church, was sent for to court by Otho the Great, and made his chancellor. On the death of Unni, he was appointed archbishop of Hamburg, but was so acceptable, by his talents and industry, to the emperor, that he still continued in the same

* Cent. Magd. Cent. X. Vol. III. † Ibid.

secular employments. Adeldagus sent a number of pastors into Denmark, and was present with Otho at Rome when the popedom was reformed. His flock at Hamburg complained, and not without reason, of his absence from them. The emperor at length gave him liberty to return home. His care of the poor, and many rather princely than pastoral virtues, were remarkable. But I can form no great idea of the spirituality of a man, who neglects residence among his flock, and continues to act in a secular capacity under three successive princes, while he holds a bishopric. He served Otho II. and III. with the same success and ability with which he had done Otho I. and after he had held his bishopric 53 years, he died under Otho III. in the year 988 *.

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Brief account of Adeldagus: was bishop 53 years; died, A. D. 988.

Libentius, an Italian, by the desire of Adeldagus, was appointed his successor. Much is said in praise of this prelate. He often visited the Vandals, a barbarous people in Poland, about the Vistula, and taught them the way of salvation. He sent pastors to distant nations, and was a shining exemplar of piety and beneficence. He died in 1013 †.

Libentius, a shining character, dies, A. D. 1013.

Adolvard, bishop of Verden, who, as we have mentioned, recommended Adeldagus to the patronage of Otho I. was himself an excellent pattern of piety and probity. He discharged the office of a faithful pastor in his diocese, and took pains to instruct the ignorant Vandals in the way of salvation ‡.

Of Adalbert, archbishop of Prague, I can find no more than has been already mentioned; though his labours deserve to have been minutely recorded.

That the true doctrines of the Gospel, and some true knowledge of their experimental use and power, were not lost in the Church altogether, the following quotations will abundantly evince; though of the authors themselves no particular account can be

* Cent. Magd. Cent. X. Vol. III. † Id. ‡ Id.

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given, nor is it very clear at what exact period of time some of them lived: the passages selected from them will serve, however, to show the religious taste of the times.

Ansbert, speaking of the effect of the Divine Word, observes, "There is no doubt, but that by the holy preaching of the Word the faithful receive the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Lord bearing witness to this, 'the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life*.'"

The value of the inward teaching of the Holy Spirit has been frequently attested in these memoirs, and in a language very similar to the following passage of Smaragdus on the same subject: "Our spiritual sense is renewed by the exercises of wisdom, meditation on the word of God, and the knowledge of his statutes; and the more proficiency any person daily makes by reading, and the deeper hold the truth has upon his understanding, the more the new man grows day by day.—Let no man attribute to the teacher, that which he understands from his mouth; for unless there be an INTERNAL TEACHER, the external one labours in vain. The Jews heard Christ preach in one manner, the Apostles in another; those to their condemnation, these to their salvation: for the Spirit taught these in the heart, what those heard outwardly by the ear.—Unless the Lord shine into the heart of the hearer the teacher labours in darkness.—For the faith of the nations comes not by the wisdom of the composition, but by the gift of divine vocation†."

"If thou wouldst have thy sons obedient to thee," says Theophylact, "instruct them in the Divine Word. Say not, that it belongs only to persons professionally religious to read the Scriptures. It is the duty of every Christian, particularly of those who are in the midst of secular employments: they

* John vi. 63. Cent. Magd. Vol. III. p. 18. † Idem.

need the greatest help, as they live in a tempest. It is for thy own interest, that thy children be well versed in Scripture; thence they will learn to reverence their parents." Let modern sceptics and infidels attend to the voice of a writer who lived in a dark age of the church; for he was a luminary of these dark ages. He most probably lived in the eleventh century; and the plain precepts just mentioned deserve, from us who live in the eighteenth, more serious attention than whole volumes of metaphysical subtilties, or political speculations. CENT. X.

Speaking of the state of man after the Fall, Theophylact observes: "Some are found, indeed, to be good tempered and benign by nature, none by exercise and meditation. And though some be reckoned good men, they adulterate every action by vain glory. But he, whose goodness centers in his own glory, not in goodness itself, whenever an opportunity offers, will indulge evil lusts. For, if among us Christians, the terrors of eternal condemnation, every advantage of study, and the lives of innumerable Saints, can scarcely preserve men in the practice of virtue, how can the nugatory tales of the Gentiles teach them virtue? It will not be matter of surprise, indeed, if they confirm them in wickedness*."

With such discrimination of ideas did this writer distinguish between the state of nature and of grace! Let us hear him express his thoughts on the Gospel, as opposed to the law. "The law, if it detect any man sinning, even in a circumstance that may appear trifling, as in gathering sticks on the sabbath day†, condemns him to death: but the Holy Spirit, receiving those who have committed innumerable offences, in the laver of baptismal regeneration, justifies them, and quickens those who are dead in sin. —The righteousness of God preserves us; not our

* Cent. Magd. Id. p. 64. † Numb. xv. 32, &c.

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own righteousness: for what righteousness can we have, who are altogether corrupt? But God hath justified us, not by our works, but by faith, which grace ought to grow more and more consummate; as the Apostle said unto the Lord, increase our faith*. Truly it is not enough to have once believed. For, as the benefits of divine grace exceed human thoughts, there is absolute need of faith to conceive and apprehend them.—The righteousness of God is by faith. This needs not our labours and works; but the whole belongs to the grace of God. Moses asserts that man is justified by works†. But none are found to fulfil them. Justification by the law is therefore rendered impossible. This is the righteousness of God, when a man is justified by grace, so that no blemish, no spot is found in him‡."

"Maxime Teucrorum ductor, quo sospite nunquam
Res equidem Trojæ victas aut regna fatebor."

So speaks Evander to Virgil's hero. With great propriety may we say of justification by Christ through faith, the leading doctrine of Christianity, that while its existence is preserved in the Church, the power of Christ's kingdom is not destroyed in the world. There, doubtless, were those in Theophylact's time, who knew how to feed on the doctrine of grace, and convert it into spiritual nourishment. This writer, it should be observed, belonged to the eastern Church, of which we hear very little in the dark ages before us. Serious and humble spirits, therefore, in those regions, were not left without a light shining amidst the tenfold obscurity of the times, by which their feet might be guided in the paths of peace. And as it is not to be supposed,

* Luke xvii. 5.

† He appears to mean the same thing which St. Paul does, by the expression, "Moses describeth the righteousness, which is of the law, that the man, which doeth those things, shall live by them."—Rom. x. 5.

‡ Cent. Magd. Id. p. 78.

that the light was preserved to no purpose, we may safely conclude that the real Church was still in existence in the East. CENT. X.

The same intelligent writer gives us an illustration of the abundance of grace, spoken of in Rom. v. which deserves to be mentioned. "Suppose a person is thrown into prison with his wife and children, because he is deep in debt, and then should be not only freed from the prison and the demands of the law, but also receive at once innumerable talents, be introduced into the royal palace, be presented with a kingdom, and accounted worthy of the same, and be reckoned a son of the king;—This is the abundance of grace*."

Hear how experimentally he speaks of Christian faith. "Faith is looked on as contemptible, because of the foolishness of preaching—He, who believes with great affection, extends his heart to God. He is united to him. His heart, inflamed, conceives a strong assurance, that it shall gain its desire. We all know this by experience, because Christ hath said, Whatever ye ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. He who believes, gives himself wholly to God, he speaks to him with tears; and in prayer holds the Lord, as it were, by the feet. O rich advantage, exceeding human thought, that every one who believes on him, gains two things, one that he does not perish, the other that he has eternal life.—The faith of Christ is a holy work, and sanctifies its possessor. It is a guide to every good work: for works without faith are dead, and so is faith without works—There needs not the circuitous and afflictive course of legal works, but God justifies in a summary way those who believe. For, if thou confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved†.—Faith is a shield, not vain

* Cent Magd. Id. p. 81. † Rom. x.

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sophisms, not fallacious argumentations. These hinder the soul, faith protects it.—Know, that thou must not exact a reason from God; but however he dispose of thee, thou must believe him*."

It would have been wonderful indeed, if the Grecian divine before us, had been exempt from the errors relating to the WILL, which for ages of greater light had pervaded the eastern Church. He appears to have mixed the powers of grace and nature in the confused manner of Chrysostom; but it is not necessary to quote any passage for this purpose. A specimen of his writings on this point may be seen in the 139th page, Vol. iii. Magd.

Giselbert, or a Theologian, whose works bear that name, and who lived in or near this century, speaks of justification in the usual manner of Augustine, and of the later Latin fathers, and with the same valuable tincture of divine truth. "When I speak of the righteousness of God," says he, "I do not mean his absolute righteousness, but that with which he clothes man, when he justifies the ungodly. The law and the prophets bear witness to this righteousness. The law, indeed, by commanding and threatening, and yet justifying no man, sufficiently indicates that man is justified by the gift of God, through the quickening Spirit—From God, beyond question, arises the beginning of salvation, never from us, nor with us. But the consent and the work, though not originating from us, is, however, not without us†." Of the work of grace, and of the duty of man in sanctification, he seems to speak with evangelical accuracy. The only error is, that by speaking of justification, as effected through the quickening Spirit, he seems to confound justification with sanctification. A common mistake!—The great luminary of Africa fell into it; and, by his authority, gave it a sanction throughout the western Church.

* Cent. Magd. Id. p. 83. † Id. p. 78.

In another passage, Giselbert, by speaking of a variety of justifications, which he multiplies to seven, and, with equal reason, he might have multiplied them to seventy times seven *, tarnishes the precious doctrine of salvation exceedingly, and leaves no distinct ground for the afflicted conscience to seek peace with God. "The first remission is baptism; the seventh is by tears and confession." Whenever men are brought to feel what sin is,—what their own sin is,—they should learn the Scripture-doctrine of justification, which is, from first to last, by grace alone through Jesus Christ, and by the instrumentality of faith. Careless and self-righteous spirits may trifle at their ease with other views of doctrine; the contrite spirit cannot rest but in Christ alone; and by the truth, as it is in Jesus, the conscience finds peace, and the heart is set at liberty to serve God in love. However, a serious investigation of the doctrine of Christian righteousness, argues some just concern for the salvation of the soul, and often leads to the most salutary consequences. The worst state of the Church is, when a deep silence is preserved concerning justification in any mode or sense, however men's minds may be amused or agitated with a variety of religious speculations or controversies. In that case, religion lives only in the brain, and has forsaken the conscience altogether.

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But no writer of this age pierces more deeply into the spirit of divine truth, than the monk Radulph, who certainly flourished about the tenth century †, though very little is known concerning him.—"Since," says he, "in every good work, divine mercy prevents us, if a man seek what recompense he may render to the Lord, he finds it not, unless he receive it also from God. Divine grace, therefore, obliges us by its beneficence, and helps us when thus obliged, by many repetitions of the same

* Id. 139. † Id. 363.

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grace, that we may not remain ungrateful."—"Since all are by nature children of wrath, and born under the yoke of diabolical slavery, there is no ground to expect that any persons, except those whom celestial clemency delivers, should of themselves choose to come out of the general mass of depravity. For it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy*." And he adds more to the same purport, speaking very fully concerning the "election of grace†," and connecting that doctrine with practical views of humility and gratitude.

Nilus retires into a convent, A. D. 940.

Nilus, of Greek extraction, was born in the year 910, in Calabria. He was allowed to have lived in a state of eminent sanctity, though a married man; a singular circumstance for those times. After his wife's death he retired about the year 940 into a convent. In 976, the bishop of Calabria, and a lord of the territory, named Leo, with many priests, went to visit him, rather with a view to try his skill than to derive any benefit from his instructions. Nilus treated them civilly, prayed with them a short time, and then put into Leo's hands a book of maxims concerning the small number of the SAVED. The company expressed their dissatisfaction at the harshness of the doctrine. This induced Nilus to undertake the proof of it from the writings of the fathers, from St. Paul, and from the Gospels. "These maxims seem terrible," said he, "but the only reason why they do so, is this, they condemn your practice. Unless you be sincerely holy, you cannot escape everlasting torments." They sighed, and trembled. He had, however, said no more than what the whole New Testament inculcates continually. And the conduct of these men, and of men like these, who abound in every age, shows how little the Scripture is really believed. One of

Further account of Nilus. A. D. 976.

* Cent. Magd. Id. p. 65. † Rom. xi. 5.

the company, whom Nilus knew to live in open sin, asked the monk, whether Solomon was saved or not? What is it to us, answered the upright Nilus, whether Solomon be saved or not? It is sufficient for you to know, that Christ pronounces damnation against all workers of iniquity. I should think it a more interesting object of inquiry for you, to consider whether you shall be saved or not. As for Solomon, the Scripture mentions not his repentance, as it does that of Manasseh.—What effect this discourse had upon his visitors we know not. But it deserved to be recorded, both to show how dangerously men exercise their ingenuity in furnishing themselves with excuses to live in sin, and also to give a sample of plain dealing in those who undertake to instruct mankind. CENT. X.

Euphraxus, a haughty nobleman, was governor of Calabria under the Greek emperor. For the eastern part of Italy remained subject to that monarch a considerable time after the establishment of the popedom. Euphraxus sought every occasion of mortifying Nilus, because he gave him no presents, as other abbots did. Falling sick, however, he sent for him, and begged of him the monastic habit. Your baptismal vows suffice, said Nilus. Repentance requires no new vows, but a change of heart and life. This sentiment of Nilus was somewhat extraordinary for the tenth century. But Euphraxus, who sought to pacify his conscience at the easiest rate, with miserable ignorance importuned the abbot to invest him with the habit, to which he at length consented. Eupraxus died three days after. Infidelity may smile, but if ever the conscience become thoroughly alarmed, even in the most hardened sceptics and sensualists, it will quickly find, that the best of our moral works are no covering to the soul from the justice of an holy God; and therefore, unless the real doctrine of salvation be understood, men in their distress will betake themselves to such

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paltry refuges as this of Euphraxus. A licentious Charles II. anxiously flying to popish ceremonies, in his dying hours, is not a singular case. Others, who, like him, in health, despised the doctrines of grace, have done the same.

Nilus refuses a bishopric.

Nilus refused the offer of the bishopric of Capua: nor could the most flattering invitations induce him to go to Constantinople. He seemed likely to enjoy tranquil retirement to his death, in his convent. But Providence ordered it otherwise. The Saracens invaded Calabria, of which they afterwards gained possession. Nilus was driven from his home, and lived a long time in other convents. Otho III. upon a visit, pressed him to accept some situation in his dominions, wherever he should choose. Nilus thanked the emperor, but said, our Divine Master will not forsake my brethren, if they be true monks, after I am gone. Ask what you please, said the emperor, I will give it you with pleasure. "The only thing, I ask you," replied Nilus, "is, that you would save your soul. For you must give an account to God, as well as other men." This good abbot died at Tusculum, in an extreme old age, in the year 1005 *.

Dies, A. D. 1005.

Such was the light, scattered here and there, in the darkness of the times, by which the God of grace and mercy called, nourished, and sanctified his Church, and preserved to himself a godly seed in the earth, who should serve him in the Gospel of his Son, and prevent the cruel tyranny of the prince of darkness from completely overspreading the world.

* A. Butler.

CENTURY XI.

CHAP. I.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.

CHAP. I.

THE genuine Church of Christ, under the protection and influence of her supreme head, existed indeed in this century; but it would be in vain to attempt a regular and systematical history of her progress. Some particular circumstances in different parts of the Christian world, some pious and successful endeavours to propagate the Gospel in pagan countries, some degrees of opposition to the reigning idolatry and superstition, and the writings of some pious and evangelical Theologians, demonstrated that the spirit of God had not forsaken the earth altogether.

Indeed, if this century may be said, in some degree, to have excelled the last, the superiority must be ascribed to the improvements of learning. For the arts and sciences revived, in a measure, among the clergy and the monks, though not cultivated * by any other set of men. I speak in regard to the western Church; for the eastern, enfeebled and oppressed by the Turks and Saracens from without, and by civil broils and factions from within, with difficulty preserved that degree of knowledge, which in those degenerate days still remained among the Greeks. I scarcely find any vestiges of Chris-

* Mosheim, Cent. XI. 479.

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tian piety among the eastern Christians at this time: indeed, the attentive reader must have observed how barren of that sort of events, which relate to Christian history, Asia in general had been for some ages. So fatal was the influence of Mahometanism, and so judicially hardened were the descendants of those, who first had honoured the religion of Jesus. Constantinople was still called a Christian city, and, in learning and politeness, was superior to any part of the west: but it is in Europe we are to look for the emanations of piety. France and Italy excelled particularly in the cultivation of learning. Robert king of France, the son and successor of Hugh Capet, who began to reign in 996, and died in 1031, distinguished himself as the friend of science. Even the ferocious Normans, whose wars and devastations were so terrible in Italy, France, and England, after they had established their respective governments, applied themselves to the cultivation of the human mind, and diffused some light among the people whom they had subdued. This was particularly the case with the southern parts of Italy, and with our own island. William the Conqueror, savage and imperious as he was, restored letters to England, which, amidst the Danish depredations, had been almost extinguished. And we shall see, at least, one learned foreigner at the head of the English Church, who, uniting piety to knowledge, was not unworthy of the Christian name. The learning itself, indeed, was not philosophical, but consisted chiefly of grammar, rhetoric and logic. It was, however, connected with divinity; the Scriptures were held in high reputation: the hardy presumption of subtile theory, and the supercilious negligence concerning piety and public worship, which have marked the character of modern times, were then but little known among men. In such circumstances, to have learned to read, to have attended to the meaning of words, and to have employed the powers of the human mind, in any

manner, on the sacred writings, were blessings to mankind. In Italy and France also there were some witnesses of divine truth, who opposed the abominations of the popedom. CENT. XI.

The great scenes of political contention in this age, were, in the east, the Crusades; in the west, the disputes between the popes and the emperors. Civil, and even, what is called ecclesiastical, history, is full of these subjects *. To my province they bear scarcely any relation. The former were attended with dreadful evils, and much augmented with the influence of that pernicious superstition, which commutes for offences, and taught men to indulge themselves in the worst of vices, through the hope of finding their way to heaven by the merit of a Crusade. I shall, however, examine a little, hereafter, the grounds of the justice or injustice of these expeditions, because the character of some pious men of great eminence is connected with the question. The disputes between the popes and the emperors seem entirely barren of instructive incidents in religion. They confirm, nevertheless, the Christian in the belief of those Scriptures which so accurately mark the character of Antichrist †. Gregory VII. commonly called Hildebrand, began the scheme, which fifty years after was completely accomplished, namely, of rescuing the election of the popes from the emperors, and of fixing it entirely in the college of Cardinals, in which it still continues. The celibacy of the clergy, and the doctrine of transubstantiation, were established by the council of Placentia in 1095. Popery, in short, reigned triumphant, and no public profession of

Popery triumphant: council of Placentia. A. D. 1095.

* The emperor of Germany, Henry III. surnamed the Black, hearing of the scandalous lives of the popes and the clergy, called the VIIIth General Council at Sutri, A. D. 1046; when the three pretenders to the popedom were deposed; Gregory VI. for Simony, Benedict IX. and Silvester III. for the same, and wicked lives in general. See Bower V.

† See particularly 2 Thes. ii. 1 Tim. iv.

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the Gospel, which professed independence of the Romish domination, could be endured in Europe.

It will be proper to close this general view of the century with a circumstance or two concerning Africa. That once fruitful mother of the Churches, who gloried in her Cyprians and Augustines, had now only two bishops. The Saracens, masters of the country, persecuted the Christians there with great bitterness: yet so infatuated were the African Christians with the love of sin, that they quarrelled among themselves, and betrayed their bishop Cyriacus into the hands of the infidels, who much abused him. Gregory VII. wrote to the good bishop, to comfort him in his distresses. A friendly letter, abounding with truly Christian sentiments, even from so imperious and unchristian a character as Hildebrand's, might convey consolation to the mind of Cyriacus *. Piety united with distress stands aloof from politics, and thankfully embraces truth as sent from her God, whatever be the instrument.

He, who seriously reflects in what glory the religion of Christ once shone in Asia and Africa; how dark, and idolatrous, and, at the same time, how insensible of their spiritual misery the inhabitants of those two quarters of the globe were, in this century, and continue even to the present times, will see with what reverential care the jewel of the Gospel should be cherished, while in our possession, lest we not only lose our own souls, but entail a curse on ages yet unborn.

CHAP. II.

THE OPPOSITION MADE TO THE ERRORS OF POPERY.

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IN the year 1017, certain persons, real or supposed heretics, were discovered in France, who were said

* Du Pin. 1st edit. Vol. IV. Cent. XI. p. 55.

to hold, "that they did not believe—that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary;—that he died for the salvation of mankind;—that he was buried and rose again;—that baptism procured the remission of sins;—that the consecration by the priest constituted the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ;—and that it was profitable to pray to the martyrs and confessors." Other practical matters of a detestable nature were ascribed to them. On their refusal to recant before a council held at Orleans, thirteen of them were burnt alive *. It is not easy to say, what was the true character of these men. It is certain, that they opposed the then reigning superstitions, and that they were willing to suffer for the doctrines, which they espoused. The crimes alleged are so monstrous and incredible, as to render the charges adduced against their doctrines very suspicious. That they, however, were truly evangelical Christians, is what I dare not affirm.

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Heretics, real or supposed, in France, A. D. 1071.

Some time after there appeared, in Flanders, another sect, which was condemned in a synod held at Arras, in the year 1025, by Gerard, bishop of Cambray and Arras. They had come from Italy, being the disciples of Gundulphus, who taught there several supposed heretical doctrines. Gerard himself, in a letter which he wrote on the subject, observes, that the disciples of Gundulphus travelled up and down to multiply converts, and that they had withdrawn many from the belief of the real presence in the Sacrament; that they owned themselves to be the scholars of Gundulphus, who had instructed them in the evangelical and apostolical doctrine. "This," said they, "is our doctrine, to renounce the world, to bridle the lusts of the flesh, to maintain ourselves by the labour of our own hands, to do violence to no man, to love the

Disciples of Gundulphus condemned. A. D. 1025.

* Du Pin. 1st Ed. Vol. IV. Cent. XI. p. 110.

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brethren. If this plan of righteousness be observed, there is no need of baptism; if it be neglected, baptism is of no avail." They particularly objected to the baptism of infants, because they were altogether incapable of understanding or confessing the truth. They denied the real presence of Christ's body in the Lord's supper: they rejected the consecration of Churches: they opposed various reigning superstitions, particularly the doctrine of purgatory and the practices connected with it. They likewise refused to worship the cross, or any images whatever. The bishop of Arras, having examined their supposed errors, and, in his own opinion, confuted them, drew up a confession of faith, contrary to those errors, which he required the heretics to sign. As they did not well understand the Latin tongue, he caused the confession to be explained to them in the vulgar tongue by an interpreter; then, according to this account, they approved and signed the instrument, and were dismissed in peace by the bishop.

It is very difficult to judge a cause by hearing only one side, and that side prejudiced to an extreme. If we are tempted to look on the doctrines of Gundulphus, in a favourable light, whatever we may think of the characters of these his timorous disciples, from this short narrative of his enemies, how much more excellent might they appear, if we had his writings and sermons? As he did not deny the use of the Lord's supper, but only the doctrine of the real presence, it is probable that he held baptism also in a similar manner. If, however, he obsolutely rejected the baptism of infants, the people, who call themselves baptists at this day, may seem with justice to claim Gundulphus as belonging to their sect. The nature of mankind, ever prone to run from one extreme to another, will easily account for this circumstance of the rejection of infant-baptism. The practice had long been sullied with superstis-

tious fooleries: the transition to its total rejection was natural. Yet we shall afterward see reason to doubt, whether this people did deny the absolute unlawfulness of infant-baptism, when we come to consider the religious views of the Waldenses; for the probability is strong, that generally those called heretics in France, Flanders, and Italy, in these middle ages, were similar to each other in doctrines and customs. And certainly we see in them a noble testimony to the existence of evangelical truth, a body of men in Italy before the year 1026, in doctrine and practice directly opposite to the Church of Rome, spreading purity of Christian worship through the world with all their might, and distinguishing themselves from the general mass of Christians in the west. I cannot believe that they held marriage as unlawful, though they were charged with this sentiment by their enemies: and notwithstanding some errors and blemishes, it is not to be doubted but that on the whole they were of the true Church of Christ. Faithfully to withstand idolatry and the reigning corruptions, required a light and strength far above nature, and I have only to regret, that, after a careful search, this is all the account I can find of them.

CENT. XI.

They opposed the Romish corruptions.

Not long after the supposed heretics of Orleans, arose the famous Berengarius of Tours, who wrote against the doctrine of the real presence. His writings called forth the most learned Romanists to defend the tenets of Paschasius Radbertus; and Berengarius was compelled to renounce, and to burn his writings. But he recanted again and again, and returned, says a contemporary popish author*,

* Bertola, Presbyter of Constantia. See Bishop Newton's 3d vol. of the Prophecies, p. 164. I have examined Du Pin, Natalis Alexander, A. Butler, and Mosheim, on this subject; and find the whole mass of information so very uninteresting, though prolix beyond measure, that the few sentences in the text seem to me all that is needful to be observed on the Berengarian controversy.

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like the dog to his vomit. Whether he died in the same sentiments, is strongly contested between the papists and the protestants. The former quote William of Malmesbury, who says, he died trembling. "This day," said he, "will my Lord Jesus Christ appear to me, either to glorify his mercy in my repentance, or, as I fear, to punish me for the mischief I have done by my example." The sentiment, whether founded on fact or not, is strongly expressive of the genius of the then reigning religion, which excluded the spirit of adoption and filial confidence in God through Christ, and supported the spirit of bondage and anxiety. And the effect was, in this case, proportional to the cause. Men had lost the Christian article of justification through faith alone; and believing salvation to be suspended on the merit of human works, they found it impossible for Berengarius, even on the most sincere repentance for his supposed heresy, to countervail the mischiefs which he had done by misleading others. Whether then we suppose the confession of Berengarius to be a forgery, or a real fact, it was delivered in the spirit of those who weighed human merits and demerits in opposite scales, and found no other method of determining the question of a man's salvation or destruction, than that which should result from the comparison of his good actions with his crimes. How impossible is it by such a procedure to give solid peace of conscience to a sinner! Joy, love, and cheerful activity in the Christian life, can have no existence on such a plan: but such was the general spirit of the religion of the times we are reviewing. It is not easy to decide whether the papists or the protestants were in the right, in the determination of the question, In what sentiments did Berengarius die? The former have the advantage of positive testimony in their favour. The question is, however, perfectly immaterial. The doctrine of the real presence depends not on the character of

Berengarius for its decision. I know no marks of his Christian piety; and his repeated dissimulations render him no honour to either party. It is, however, of some moment to observe, that he was the instrument of calling forth a degree of salutary opposition to the errors of the times. He called the Church of Rome a church of malignants, the council of vanity, and the seat of Satan. He corrupted, say some old historians, almost all the French, Italians, and English, with his depravities. The expressions are much too strong; but, no doubt, a salutary check was given to the growing superstitions: the opposition to the popedom, though it did not lay hold of the central truths of the Gospel, might yet pave the way for still more effective exertions; and served at least to inform mankind, that the court of Rome was not infallible.

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CHAP. III.

THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN THIS CENTURY.

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THE* work of Christian piety, which had been successfully carried on in Hungary, was now crowned with still greater prosperity. Stephen the king, who had been baptized by Adalbert bishop of Prague, and who began to reign in the year 997, showed himself a zealous patron of the Gospel. Under his auspices, Astricus came into Hungary, opened a school, and educated ministers, while Boniface, one of his disciples, preached the word in Lower Hungary. The zeal of Stephen, indeed, was much stimulated by his pious queen, Gisla, daughter of the emperor Henry II. He often accompanied

Stephen king of Hungary born, A. D. 997.

* Cent. Magd. Cent. XI.

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the preachers, and pathetically exhorted his subjects. He suppressed barbarous customs, and restrained blasphemy, theft, adultery and murder. His kindness to the poor, and, indeed, his whole moral conduct, was admirable. His excellent code of laws are to this day the basis of the laws of Hungary. It is inscribed to his son Emeric, whom he exhorts to cultivate sincere humility, the true glory of a king. He forbids in it all impiety, the violation of the Sabbath, and irreverent behaviour in the house of God. This monarch defeated the prince of Transilvania, who had invaded his dominions, and took him prisoner; but restored him to liberty, on condition that he should allow the Gospel to be preached to the Transilvanians, without molestation. Stephen was a prosperous monarch, but found afflictions at home in the loss of all his children. His mind, was, however, improved in divine things by his sufferings. He laboured three years under a complication of diseases, and died in the year 1038*. He had lived to see all Hungary become externally Christian, though Christianity existed there, adulterated, or clouded at least by papal domination, and by the fashionable superstitions.

Stephen was the first Christian monarch of Hungary. He died, A. D. 1038.

Gerard, a Venetian, had been much employed by king Stephen, as bishop of Choriad, a diocese of which two-thirds of the inhabitants were idolaters. In less than a year, they, in general, had received the forms of Christianity from the pious labours of Gerard. The power of Stephen had seconded the views of the bishop; but the prospect changed on the king's decease. His nephew and successor Peter, persecuted Gerard: he was, however, expelled by his subjects in the year 1042, and Abas, a nobleman, was made king of Hungary, who being slain after two years, Peter was recalled, but was

Brief account of his successor Peter.

* Alban Butler.

once more banished. Andrew, the son of Ladislaus, the cousin of king Stephen, was appointed king, on the condition of restoring idolatry. Gerard and three other bishops endeavoured to divert him from the design. But they were assaulted on the road by duke Vathas, a zealous pagan. Andrew himself came up to the spot, and rescued one of the bishops: the other three, of whom Gerard, was one, had fallen by the arm of the barbarian.—It is probable, however, that Divine Providence permitted their atrocious villainy for the good of the Church. The heart of Andrew was moved: he had seen of what idolatry was capable: he examined Christianity, received it, repressed idolatry, and reigned successfully. After the Hungarians had seen such a prince as Stephen, and had felt the good effects on society resulting from the establishment of Christianity, that they could still prefer idolatry is a deplorable proof of the native power of human depravity. What long-continued exertions are necessary to establish genuine goodness in a country!

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In* Denmark, Othingar, a bishop of that country, extended the pale of the Church by his labours; and Unwan, the bishop of Hamburg, under the patronage of the emperor Henry II. cut down the idolatrous groves, which the people of his diocese frequented, and erected churches in their stead.

Godeschalcus†, duke of the Vandals, revived among his subjects the regard for the Gospel, which they had once embraced, and which they had afterward neglected. It is not easy to know precisely what were the limits of his dominions. But I find Lubeck, Mecklenburg, and Sclavonia mentioned as belonging to, or as, at least, contiguous to his dukedom. Much has been said in praise of this prince, and of the success of his-

* Cent. Magd. Cent. XI. † Idem.

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labours*. He is reported to have, in person, exhorted his people with much affection in the public assemblies; and John, a Scotchman, the bishop of Mecklenburg, baptized great numbers of the Sclavonians. Yet this last people, together with the Obotriti, whose capital town was Mecklenburg, the Venedi, who dwelt on the banks of the Vistula, and the Prussians, continued pagans, in a great measure, throughout this century. Boleslaus, king of Poland, attempted to force these nations into a profession of Christianity; and some of his attendants used methods to evangelize them, which were better adapted to the nature of the Gospel. Boniface, in particular†, and eighteen other persons, set out from Germany, to labour among the Prussians, and were massacred by that barbarous people. They seem to have been among the last of the European nations who submitted to the yoke of Christ. In the zealous attempts made for their conversion, though unsuccessful, we see abundant proofs, that the spirit of propagating the Gospel, which was the brightest gem of these dark ages, still existed.

Nor had the zeal of our own ancestors evaporated in this century. In the year 1001, at the desire of Olaus II. king of Sweden, some English priests were sent over into the north by king Ethelred. Of these Sigefrid, archdeacon of York, was one. His labours were very successful, and he was appointed bishop of Wexia, in East-Gothland. Having established the churches there, he preached to the infidels in West-Gothland, leaving his nephews to govern his diocese while he was absent. But they were murdered by the pagan nobility of the country. A melancholy proof, how strong the spirit of idolatry still remained in these northern regions! The same kind of family pride, which, at this day, preserves the remnants of popery in protestant countries,

English missionary to Sweden. A. D. 1001.

* Crantzius in Vandalia. † Mosheim, Cent. XI. Chap. I.

preserved the existence of paganism in Sweden. Sigefrid, however, returned into his diocese, died there a natural death, and was buried at Wexia.

This man is said to have finished his course about the year 1002; an account inconsistent, as to the order of time, with that which has been already given. But not to trouble the reader with such niceties of chronology, as at this distance of time are impossible to be adjusted, it is more material to observe that he appears to have been an apostolic person; that on his first arrival in Sweden, he was obliged, chiefly, to preach by interpreters; that he prevailed on the king to spare the murderers of his nephews: and, that though he was very poor, he refused to touch the fine which had been exacted on those murderers, and which had been offered to him as a present by the Swedish monarch*. Gotebald, another English missionary, was appointed bishop in Norway, and preached in Schonen.

Also to Norway.

Ulfrid, a learned and virtuous Englishman, preached the faith, first in Germany, afterward in Sweden, under the patronage of king Olaus; where he was an instrument of converting many, till, in the year 1028, preaching against the idol Thor, and hewing it down with a hatchet, he was slain by the pagans. See Adam of Bremen, who wrote his history of the Church in 1080.

Ulfrid slain by the pagans in Sweden, A. D. 1028.

Canute, king of Denmark, natural son of Swein II. whose great uncle Canute had reigned in England, was carefully educated by his father, who had no legitimate issue. He became king of Denmark by election, warred against the turbulent barbarians his neighbours, and planted the profession of Christianity in Courland, Samogitia, and Livonia. His zeal for the maintenance of the clergy having disgusted his subjects, he was deserted and murdered.

Canute IV. surnamed the Saint, murdered about A. D. 1086.

* Olaus Magn. B. 17. C. 20. Collier's Ecc. Hist. Alban Butler, Vol. II.

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His brother Olaus succeeded, whose successor Eric III. restored the authority of the clergy. The life of Canute was written by Ælnoth, a monk of Canterbury, who lived twenty-four years in Denmark, and who wrote in 1105. He tells us, that the first preachers of the faith in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, were English priests; that the Danes embraced the Gospel with zeal, but that the Swedes, obstinate in their idolatry, murdered an Englishman, named Eschil, while he was preaching Christ to some savage tribes. That Sweden, however, was chiefly evangelized by Anglo-Saxon missionaries, is the remark of Stiernman, in his treatise on the state of learning among the ancient Swedes*.

Ælnoth, a monk of Canterbury, wrote his life.

Olaus, king of Norway, assisted the Danes against Ethelred of England, and, in his return from England, carried over several priests; one of whom, named Grimkele, was appointed bishop of Drontheim, the capital of king Olaus. This prince abolished idolatrous customs in Norway, Orkney, and Iceland. He used to travel with zealous preachers, exhorting his subjects, and destroying temples. The pagans, at length, aided by Canute of England, defeated and slew him in the year 1030. His son Magnus was called home from Russia, and became king of Norway in 1039†.

Olaus II. king of Norway, slain by Canute of England, A. D. 1030.

The triumphs of the Gospel in Denmark were, upon the whole, very conspicuous in this century. Hear the account of Adam of Bremen, who wrote, concerning the situation of this country in the year 1080. "Look," says he, "at that very ferocious nation of the Danes—For a long time they have been accustomed, in the praises of God, to resound Alleluia. Look at that piratical people. They are now content with the fruits of their own country. Look at that horrid region, formerly altogether inaccessible on account of idolatry; they now eagerly admit the preachers of the word‡."

* But. Vol. II. † Ibid. VII. ‡ Gibbon, Vol. V. C. 55.

From this very imperfect account, for which I am obliged to Gibbon, and which he candidly admits to be true, we may collect, what a blessed work it is to propagate the Gospel of Christ; that no men deserve better of mankind than faithful missionaries; and, that the allegorical descriptions of the effects of real Christianity, which we meet with in the prophets, have a deep and solid meaning*. To see Danes and Englishmen enjoying together, in mutual confidence and charity, the blessings of true religion, must have been surprising to those, who had known with what savage barbarity the former had desolated the habitations of the latter. In truth, that religion which could mollify, transform, and rectify the heart of an ancient Dane, must indeed be divine. These are the triumphs of the Gospel. It was the preaching of the Cross, attended with the energy of the Holy Spirit, which effected this salutary change of manners in the north of Europe. Denmark had inflicted much evil on her southern neighbours, and they requited her with spiritual blessings. It is remarkable, that, to this day, no nation has exceeded the Danes in labours for the propagation of the Gospel, in proportion to their abilities and opportunities. And it must be confessed, that they owe much to mankind on the score of gratitude, for the favours of the same kind which their ancestors received.

For want of materials, I cannot dwell on the particulars of the conversion of this people †. But

* Isaiah xi. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid.

† One instance, however, is recorded, that deserves to be mentioned. William, an English priest, attended Canute the great, in one of his voyages from England to Denmark. Moved with pity on account of the idolatry of the Danes, he desired to be left as a missionary. His labours were successful, and he was appointed bishop of Roschild in Zealand. King Swein having put to death some persons without a legal trial, William forbad his entrance into the Church. Several courtiers draw-

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the durable change of their manners intimates, that their country must have been blessed with one of those gracious effusions of the Holy Spirit, the consequences of which are commonly felt for ages after. Toward the close of this century, the northern nations ceased to invade the southern entirely. The last attempt was made by Magnus, king of Norway, on the isle of Anglesea; but he was repulsed by Hugh earl of Shrewsbury *, in the eleventh year of William Rufus. "That restless people seem about this time to have learned the use of tillage, which thenceforth kept them at home, and freed the other nations of Europe from the devastations spread over them by those piratical invaders. This proved one great cause of the subsequent settlement and improvement of the southern nations."

I quote the words of Hume, which represent in a very perspicuous manner the advantages resulting from the civilization of the north, not only to the Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes, but also to the south of Europe. It is in assigning the cause of this happy change, that I am obliged to dissent from that elegant historian. He thinks that the effect is sufficiently accounted for by these northern people having learned the use of tillage. But, besides that he has no historical evidence of this fact, and supports it by mere conjecture, it is fair to ask, How came they to be so docile and tractable, as to submit to the arts of agriculture? Does a nation, habituated to arms and to idleness, easily give itself up to industry, and the arts of peace? If we can answer this question aright, we shall know to what is to be ascribed the happy transformation of the north. Scanty as my materials have been,

ing their swords, the bishop offered them his neck. Swein submitted, conformed to the rules of penance imposed by William, and ever after concurred with his views. The Bishop of Roschild died in the year 1067. Alban Butler.

* Hume, Vol. I. C. V.

I have yet shown, that the Gospel had now been for three centuries preached in Scandinavia. To this, doubtless, as the principal cause, we must attribute the happy alteration of manners in those barbarous regions. Christian godliness has the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come. While it conducts enslaved souls into liberty, and, turning them from the power of Satan to God, invests them with the garments of salvation, it also meliorates their condition in this life, and diffuses through the world the most salutary precepts of peace, order, and tranquillity. Let not men expect the general civilization of the globe by any other methods. When the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord then will the nations learn war no more. We enjoy, at this day, the advantages of society derived to Europe, from the propagation of the Gospel, while we ungratefully depreciate the labours of those Christian missionaries, through which, under God, those advantages were conveyed to us. Our Saviour has directed us to pray to the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest; and every one, who breathes the genuine spirit of the Gospel, will devoutly obey the precept. CENT. XI.

CHAP. IV.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND.

As the importance of our own country began to be displayed in this century, it will be proper to take some notice of the appearance of religion in an island, which, we have seen, had so distinguished a share in diffusing divine truth through the northern parts of Europe. Even the very little of evangelical religion which we may discover, may deserve our attention. CHAP. IV.

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In the reign of Ethelred, a very cruel massacre of the Danes was, by royal order, made throughout his dominions. The rage of the populace, excited by so many injuries, was extreme, and made no distinction between the innocent and the guilty. Swein, king of Denmark, amply revenged these cruelties, by repeated devastations: and the unwarlike Ethelred fled into Normandy to save his life; while his subjects felt all the miseries which might be expected from incensed and victorious barbarians. Among other instances of their hostilities, they levied a contribution on the county of Kent, and murdered the archbishop of Canterbury, who had refused to countenance the exaction *.

The author, whose short account I have followed, does not deign to give us the name of this archbishop, nor to relate a single circumstance of his murder. I cannot but think, however, that he would have enlarged on the subject if it would have gratified his dislike of religion. But thus a conduct, at once the most magnanimous and patriotic, is buried in obscurity, because the hero was an ecclesiastic. Let it, however, receive the justice which is due to it from these memoirs.

The † Danes were besieging Canterbury, when Alphage, the archbishop, was entreated by his friends to save his own life. "God forbid," said Alphage, "that I should tarnish my character by so inglorious a conduct; and should be afraid of going to heaven, because a violent death lies across the passage. I have been the instrument of drawing over several considerable persons among these Danes to the Gospel: if this be a fault, I shall be happy in suffering for it. I have ransomed some of my countrymen, and supported others when in captivity. If Danes be angry, because I have reproved their sins, it behoves me to remember him who hath said, 'If thou

* Hume, Vol. I. p. 144. † Collier's Ecc. Hist.

give not the wicked warning, his blood will I require at thine hand.' It is the character of a hireling to leave the sheep when he seeth the wolf coming. I mean, therefore, to stand the shock, and submit to the order of Divine Providence *."

The archbishop, influenced by these motives, remained in Canterbury, and exhorted the people, as a Christian pastor; but the Danes entered the city by violence, and exercised the most horrid barbarities, particularly on ladies of quality, whom they dragged to the stake and burnt to death, nor did they spare even infants. Alphage, moved at these hideous scenes, had the boldness to expostulate with them. "The cradle," says he, "can afford no triumphs for soldiers. It would be better for you to exercise your vengeance on me, whose death may give some celebrity to your names. Remember, some of your troops have, through my means, been brought over to the faith of Christ, and I have frequently rebuked you for your acts of injustice." The Danes, exasperated at his words, seized, and bound the archbishop, and kept him prisoner for seven months. His liberty, however, was offered to him, on condition of immense payments to be made by himself and by Ethelred the king. He told them, that the sums were too large to be raised by any exactions, and he firmly refused to drain the treasures of the Church for the sake of saving his life; accounting it wrong to give to Pagans those sums which had been devoted to the honour of religion, and to the relief of the poor. The merciless Danes enraged beyond measure, threw him down and stoned him, while he prayed for his enemies and for the Church; and, at length, a certain Dane, lately become a Christian, dispatched him, in order to free him from his pain.—One of his successors, the famous Lanfranc, doubted whether Alphage ought to

* Osbern de Vit. Elphegi. Hoveden's Annals.

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be looked on as a martyr, because he had not died explicitly for the christian faith. But Anselm, a still more famous personage, told Lanfranc, that Alphage was a real martyr, who died rather than commit an unjust thing. Nor is it easy to conceive that any spirit, less than that of a Christian, could have conducted him through such a scene, and supported him with so much fortitude and charity.—Alphage was murdered in the year 1013.

Alphage archbishop of Canterbury, murdered, A. D. 1013.

A preceding archbishop, probably his immediate predecessor, Elfric, in the year 1006, had directed in one of the canons published at a council*, in which he presided, that every parish-priest should be obliged on Sundays and on other holidays, to explain the Lord's prayer, the Creed, and the Gospel for the day, before the people, in the English tongue. While historians enlarge on the quarrels between the papacy and the civil power, and descant, with tedious prolixity, on the superstitions, which were in vogue during the dark ages, they are too apt to pass over in a slight and cursory manner such facts as these, which appear too important to be overlooked. Let the reader who has seriously considered the importance and excellency of evangelical truth, reflect on the preciousness of the doctrines, which the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and some of the plainest and most practical passages of the New Testament do either exhibit or imply; and he will be convinced, that, if the canon of Elfric had been obeyed with any tolerable degree of spirit and exactness in a number of parishes in England, the ignorance and darkness could not have been so complete nor so universal, as we are generally taught to believe it was. Such bishops as Elfric and Alphage must have been useful lights in those times. The Gospels read in the Churches, I suppose, were either the same as, or similar to, those which are read at this day; nor is it to be imagined, that a familiar

* Collier.

exposition of them, in conjunction with the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, would be in vain; because, in every age, the preaching of Christian fundamentals is accompanied with a divine energy, and the word returns not void to its Divine Author, but prospers in the thing whereto he sends it*. The mixture of superstitious inventions might adulterate, but could not altogether destroy, the efficacy of the word of God. Nor can I doubt but many at this day, who boast of their exemptions from papal ignorance, and who call themselves enlightened, because they have been refined by philosophical and political knowledge, are themselves much inferior, in Christian light and spirit, to many who lived in the dark times of the eleventh century, under the benefit of such advantages of instruction as the canon before us afforded. For that elementary knowledge, which is the object of the canon, is ever more salutary in its influence, than the most ingenious subtilties of literary refinement in religion. These, like the spider's web, are intricate, and are often found to be flimsy and void of any substantial advantage to mankind. Armed with catechetical knowledge, I conceive that serious minds would in that age find rest and food to their souls; and the love of God being, by this means, shed abroad in the heart, would constrain the missionaries of that period to diffuse the Gospel in the northern regions with ability and success.

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The facts, on which these reflections are founded, may show us, that God had not forsaken this island during the disastrous reign of Ethelred, though the political hemisphere was gloomy beyond expression. Ethelred himself, had returned into his kingdom, yet was he never able to make head against the Danes, who at length, in the year 1017, brought the English into total subjection. Their king and his two sons in succession, governed

* Isaiah lv

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Conquest of England by William, duke of Normandy, A. D. 1066.

which, however, recovered itself from the Danish yoke, and received Edward the Confessor, the son of Ethelred, as its monarch, in the year 1041. But the Saxon line, though restored, was unable to maintain itself on the throne, and soon sunk under the power of William the Norman, who in the year 1066, beheld himself the sovereign of England, which continues under the government of his posterity to this day.

Under William*, named the Conqueror, the papal power, which hitherto had by no means been so absolute in England as in the southern countries, began to be felt more strongly, and soon reached the same height which it had attained in France and Italy. The tyrant found it a convenient engine for the support of his own despotic authority: and while he took care that every one of his subjects should, in ecclesiastical matters, bow under the yoke of the bishop of Rome, he reserved to himself the supreme dominion in civil affairs, and exercised it with the most unqualified rigour. Lanfranc, whom he appointed archbishop of Canterbury, zealously supported the power of Rome, and confirmed the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation by his influence and authority. His successor, Anselm, was no less devoted to the pope, and maintained several famous contests with his sovereign William Rufus, the son and successor of the Conqueror. This archbishop contributed much, by his influence, to settle the celibacy of the clergy in England; and it must be confessed, that even the virtues of this great man, through the peculiar infelicity of the times, were attended with

* Osmund, a Norman, privy counsellor to William the Conqueror, afterwards bishop of Salisbury, corrected the [illegible]y used in his diocese. And he was thought to have done [illegible] so judiciously, that the service "In Usum Sarum," [illegible] in other dioceses, and became common throughout [illegible] before this time, every diocese had its appro[illegible]. Collier's Eccles. History.

great disadvantages to the state of society. For it ought to be observed, that if we except his attachment to the authority of the pope, and his passion for the fashionable superstitions, his conduct was pious and exemplary: his zeal against the luxury, simony, and vices of the great, was laudable: and, above all, his defence of evangelical truth, adorned by an upright course of life and conversation, preserved under God some genuine remains of godliness in the nation. Nor ought we to follow implicitly the ideas of our protestant historians, who, in every debate between the king and the Church, are sure to decide against the latter. What could be more arbitrary, for instance, than the demand of a thousand pounds which William Rufus made upon Anselm? And what more warrantable than the conduct of the latter* He offered the king five hundred pounds, which were refused in disgust. Anselm gave the sum to the poor, rather than rack his tenants to double it, and said to the tyrant,—"If I am used according to my station, all I have is at your service; if I am treated as a slave, I shall keep my property to myself."

And undoubtedly the rapacity and profaneness of the Norman princes, particularly of William Rufus, in the seizure and alienation of ecclesiastical benefices, were justly opposed by the bishops of those times. It is only to be wished, that they had conducted their opposition on the grounds of Scripture, and the precedents of the primitive Church, not on the authority of the court of Rome.

Nothing else worthy of a place in these memoirs seems to have occurred, in the general history of our island, during the course of this century, except what relates to the personal character of Margaret queen of Scotland: a woman of the rarest piety, and of a character fitted to throw a lustre on the purest ages.

* Collier.

CHAP. IV.

She was sister to Edgar Atheling, the grandson of Edmund Ironside, who was the son and successor of Ethelred. Edgar was a peculiar favourite of the English, because he was the last of the Saxon line of princes. In the reign of William the Norman, he and his sister found a safe * retreat in Scotland, under the protection of Malcolm, who, by the assistance of Edward the Confessor, had recovered the throne of Scotland from the usurper Macbeth. Malcolm married the English princess. Wonderful things are related of her piety, liberality, and humility. Through her influence, the ferocious spirit of her husband received a happy tincture of humanity. She was enabled to reform the kingdom of Scotland in a great degree, and to introduce a more serious regard to the duties of the Lord's day, than had been known in that country. She had by Malcolm six sons and two daughters. Three of her sons reigned successively, and were esteemed excellent monarchs. Her daughter Matilda was wife to Henry I. of England, and was looked on as a pious Christian. Margaret had taken uncommon care of her children's education, and the fruits of her labours appeared in their lives. Theodoric, her confessor, observes, that she was remarkably attentive in public prayer. "And," says he, "she would discourse with me concerning the sweetness of everlasting life, in such a manner as to draw tears from my eyes." This same Theodoric, a monk of Durham, wrote her life. She was afflicted with sickness at the very time in which her husband Malcolm was slain at Alnwick in Northumberland, in the time of William Rufus, in 1093. The bitter news was brought to her ears: her reflection upon it was truly Christian. "I thank thee, O Lord, that this great affliction is evidently sent to purify me from my sins. O Lord Jesus Christ, who by

Malcolm III. surnamed Canmore, slain, A. D. 1093.

* Alban Butler, Vol. V.

thy death hast given life to the world, deliver me from evil." She survived this event only a few days. A princess of such accomplishments could not have shone in vain in Scotland; but, most probably, must have led many, in a rude and ignorant age, to think that there was something real in godliness. CENT. XI.

CHAP. V.

ANSELM.

CHAP. V.

THAT good men frequently appear to more advantage in private life than in public, is a remark which was perhaps never better exemplified than in this prelate, of whom all that is known by the generality of readers is, that he was a strenuous supporter of the papal dominion in England. I can easily conceive that he might be influenced by the purest motives in this part of his conduct, when I reflect on the shameless and profane manners of the Norman princes. But his private life was purely his own, originating more directly from the honest and good heart, with which, through grace, he was eminently endowed. As a divine and a Christian, he was the first of characters in this century, and is, therefore, deserving of some attention.

He * was born at Aoust in Piedmont. From early life his religious cast of mind was so prevalent, that, at the age of fifteen, he offered himself to a monastery, but was refused, lest his father should have been displeased. He afterwards became entangled in the vanities of the world; and, to his death, he bewailed the sins of his youth. Becoming a scholar of Lanfranc, his predecessor in the See of Canterbury, at that time a monk at Bec, in

Anselm becomes a monk. A. D. 1060.

* Butler, Vol. IV.

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Normandy, he commenced monk in the year 1060, at the age of twenty-seven. He afterwards became the prior of the monastery. His progress in religious knowledge was great: but mildness and charity seem to have predominated in all his views of piety. The book, commonly called Augustine's Meditations, was chiefly abstracted from the writings of Anselm. At the age of forty-five he became abbot of Bec.

Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, dies, A. D. 1089.

Lanfranc dying in 1089, William Rufus usurped the revenues of the See of Canterbury, and treated the monks of the place in a barbarous manner. For several years this profane tyrant declared, that none should have the See while he lived; but a fit of sickness overawed his spirit; and conscience, the voice of God, which often speaks even in the proudest and the most insensible, severely reproved his wickedness; insomuch that he nominated Anselm to be the successor of Lanfranc. That Anselm should have accepted the office with much reluctance, under such a prince, is by no means to be wondered at: and, the more upright and conscientious men are, the more wary and reluctant will they always be found in accepting offices of so sacred a nature; though it is natural for men of a secular spirit to judge of others by themselves, and to suppose the "nolo episcopari," to be, without any exceptions, the language of hypocrisy.

William Rufus appoints Anselm his successor.

Anselm pressed the king to allow the calling of councils, in order to institute an inquiry into crimes and abuses; and also to fill the vacant abbeys, the revenues of which William had reserved to himself with sacrilegious avarice. Nothing but the conviction of conscience, and the ascendancy which real uprightness maintains over wickedness and profligacy, could have induced such a person as William Rufus to promote Anselm to the See, though he must have foreseen how improbable it was, that the abbot would ever become the tame instrument of his tyranny and oppression. In fact,

Anselm, finding the Church overborne by the iniquities of the tyrant, retired to the continent with two monks, one of whom, named Eadmer, wrote his life. CENT. XI.

Living a retired life in Calabria, he gave employment to his active mind in writing a treatise on the reasons why God should become man, and on the doctrine of the Trinity and the Incarnation: a work at that time useful to the Church of Christ, as he refuted the sentiments of Roscelin, who had published erroneous views concerning the Trinity. For, after a sleep of many ages, the genius of Arianism or Socinianism, or both, had awakened, and taken advantage of the general ignorance, to corrupt the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Anselm knew how to reason closely and systematically, after the manner of the famous Peter Lombard, master of the sentences, and bishop of Paris; and he was properly the first of the scholastic divines. The method of ratiocination then used, was, no doubt, tedious, verbose, and subtile, and, in process of time, grew more and more perplexed. It was, however, preferable to the dissipation and inanity, which, in many publications of our times, pretend to the honour of good sense and sound wisdom, though devoid of learning and industry. " Moreover, the furniture of the schools, in the hands of a fine genius like Anselm, adorned with solid piety, and under the control of a good understanding, stemmed the torrent of profane infidelity, and ably supported the cause of godliness in the world. Roscelin was confuted, and the common orthodox doctrine of the Trinity upheld itself in the Church. What were the precise views of Roscelin will be better understood, when we come to introduce one of his scholars, the famous Peter Abelard, to the reader's notice. Anselm retired into Calabria.

Anselm, weary of an empty title of dignity, and seeing no probability of being able to serve the

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Church in the archbishopric, entreated the pope to give him leave to resign it, but in vain. Nor does he seem to have been justly chargeable with the display of an "ostentatious humility," when he had first refused the promotion*. The integrity with which he had acted, ever since that promotion had taken place, ought to have rescued him from the illiberal censure. "Rufus had detained in prison several persons, whom he had ordered to be freed during the time of his penitence; he still preyed upon the ecclesiastical benefices; the sale of spiritual dignities continued as open as ever; and he kept possession of a considerable part of the revenues belonging to the See of Canterbury." Was it a crime, or was it an instance of laudable integrity in Anselm, to remonstrate against such proceedings? I suppose the candour and good sense of the author, to whom I allude, would have inclined him to praise that upright conduct for which Anselm was obliged to retire to the continent, had not this same Anselm been a priest, and a priest too of sincere zeal and fervour. In justice to Anselm, it should, moreover, be observed, that one reason why he wished to resign his archbishopric was, that he believed he might be of more service to the souls of men in a merely clerical character, which was more obscure. And he was naturally led to assign this reason to the pope, from the observation which he made of the effect of his preaching on audiences in Italy.

Men of superior talents, however, are frequently born to drudge in business or in arts, whether they be in prosperous or in adverse circumstances. For mankind feel the need of such men; and they themselves are not apt to bury their powers in indolence. A council was called at Bari by pope Urban, to settle with the Greeks the dispute which had long

* See Hume, Vol. I. p. 302.

separated the eastern and western Churches, concerning the procession of the Holy Ghost. For the Greek Church, it should seem, without any spiritual reason, had denied the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son; and had, therefore, thrust the words AND THE SON* out of the Nicene Creed. While the disputants were engaged, the pope called on Anselm, as his father and master, for his reply. The archbishop arose, and by his powers of argumentation silenced the Greeks.

At Lyons, he wrote on the conception of the Virgin, and on original sin; and thus he employed himself in religious, not in secular cares, during the whole of his exile. A strong proof of his exemption from that domineering ambition, of which he has been accused. In the year 1100 he heard of the death of his royal persecutor, which he is said to have seriously lamented, and returned into England by the invitation of Henry I. To finish, at once, the account of his unpleasant contests with the Norman princes, he, at length, was enabled to compromise them. The great object of controversy was the same in England as in the other countries of Europe, namely, "Whether the investiture of bishoprics should be received from the king or from the pope." Anselm, moved undoubtedly by a conscientious zeal, because all the world bore witness to his integrity, was decisive for the latter; and the egregious iniquities, and shameless violations of all justice and decorum, practised by princes in that age, would naturally strengthen the prejudices of Anselm's education. To receive investiture from the pope for the spiritual jurisdiction, and, at the same time, to do homage to the king for the temporalities, was the only medium, which in those times could be found, between the pretensions of the civil and ecclesiastical dominion; and matters

Rufus dies, A. D. 1100.

Anselm returns to England.

* "Proceeding from the Father and the Son."

CHAP. V.

were settled, on this plan, both in England and in Germany.

If Anselm then contributed to the depression of the civil power, and the confirmation of the papal, he was unhappily carried away by a popular torrent, which few minds had power to resist. It seems certain, however, that ambition formed no part of this man's character. "While I am with you," he would often say to his friends, "I am like a bird in a nest amidst her young, and enjoy the sweets of retirement and social affections. But when I am thrown into the world, I am like the same bird hunted and harassed by ravens or other fowls of prey: the incursions of various cares distract me; and secular employments, which I love not, vex my soul." He, who spent a great part of his life in retirement, who thought, spake, and wrote so much of vital godliness; and whose moral character was allowed, even by his enemies, to have ever been without a blot, deserves to be believed in these declarations*.

Let us then attend to those traits of character, which were more personal, and in which the heart of the man more plainly appears. He practised that, which all godly persons have ever found salutary, and even necessary, namely, retired and devotional meditation, and even watched long in the night for the same purpose. One day, a hare, pursued by the hounds, ran under his horse for refuge as he was riding. The object bringing at once to his recollection a most awful scene, he stopped, and said weeping, "this hare reminds me of a sinner just dying, surrounded with devils, waiting for their prey." It was in this manner that he used to spiritualize every object, a practice ever derided by profane minds, whether performed injudiciously or not; but to which, in some degree,

* See his Life, written by Eadmer.

every devout and pious spirit on earth has been addicted. CENT. XI.

In a national synod, held at St. Peter's, Westminster, he forbad men to be sold as cattle, which had till then been practised. For the true reliefs and mitigations of human misery lay entirely, at that time, in the influence of Christianity; and small as that influence then was, the ferocity of the age was tempered by it; and human life was thence prevented from being entirely degraded to a level with that of the beasts which perish.

Anselm died in the sixteenth year of his archbishopric, and in the seventy-sixth of his age. Anselm dies, aged 76. Toward the end of his life, he wrote on the will, predestination, and grace, much in Augustine's manner. In prayers, meditations, and hymns, he seems to have had a peculiar delight. Eadmer, says, that he used to say, "If he saw hell open, and sin before him, he would leap into the former, to avoid the latter." I am sorry to see this sentiment, which, stripped of figure, means no more than what all good men allow, that he feared sin more than punishment, aspersed by so good a divine as Fox the martyrologist*. But Anselm was a papist, and the best protestants have not been without their prejudices.

But it is time to let Anselm speak for himself. We shall hear from him something by no means unworthy the attention of the most intelligent Christians. A direction for the visitation of the sick was composed by Anselm†; the substance of which is as follows. Two previous questions were to be asked by the minister: the first was, Dost thou believe that thou deservest damnation? The second was, Dost thou intend to lead a new life? When the sick man had returned an answer in the affirmative to these questions, he was further asked, Dost

* Acts and Monuments, Vol. I. † Anselmi. Opera.

CHAP. V.

thou believe, that thou canst not be saved but by the death of Christ?—The sick man answered, I do so believe. Then the minister says to him, See then, while life remains in thee, that thou repose thy confidence only in the death of Christ; trust in nothing else; commit thyself wholly to this death; cover thyself wholly with this alone; mix thyself wholly with this death; involve thyself wholly in this death. And, if the Lord will judge thee, say, Lord I cast the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between myself and thy judgment; otherwise I will not engage in judgment with thee. And if he shall say to thee, that thou art a sinner, say, I place the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and my sins. If he shall say to thee, that thou hast deserved damnation, say, Lord, I cast the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and my evil deserts, and I offer his merits for that merit which I ought to have had, and have not. If he shall say that he is angry with thee, say, Lord, I cast the death of the Lord Jesus Christ between me and thy displeasure."

It cannot be doubted, but all this process would be mere formality in the hands of many persons, both pastors and people. But so, even at this day, are several the most spiritual catechisms, and the most evangelical exhortations. While the world is, as it is, depraved and sensual, the very best means of grace will be lost on many. But it is not easy to conceive, that he who composed these directions could himself have been a mere formalist. They breathe the spirit of one who seems to have felt what it is to appear before the Majesty of God; and also, how unclean aud defiled with sin both his nature and practice had been; and how unsafe it is to rest on any thing but Christ crucified. The jewel of the Gospel, peace by the blood of Christ alone, which is the doctrine that gives law and being, order and efficacy, to all the other doctrines of

Christianity, is contained in this plain catechism; and the variety and repetition, which the author indulges, offensive as they are in the light of criticism, demonstrate the author's sincerity and zeal, and are the natural effect of the impression which had been felt in his own conscience. For those alone whose hearts have been ploughed deep; who have been truly serious for eternity; have been well practised in self-examination; and are become well acquainted with their own demerits, are disposed to relish the peculiarities and the essentials of the Gospel. Let a man once know himself a sinner deserving destruction, and be truly desirous to become a new creature, and he will find that the Gospel of Christ is the only cordial that can console him. This cordial is here administered: and as it belongs to true penitents only, to the humble and the contrite, so is it administered by the skilful divine before us: or, in other words, that doctrine, which is "most wholesome and very full of comfort," namely, the doctrine of justification "before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings*," is preached by a bishop of the eleventh century. So strong was the provision made by the God of all grace for the preservation of evangelical truth in the darkest times. With happy inconsistency, Anselm, in seeking peace to his conscience, and in preaching peace to others, sees none of the manifold superstitious methods with which the papacy abounded, and which he himself professed. I suppose he would give some lower meaning to the doctrine of the merits of Saints and the efficacy of pilgrimages; some meaning, which should not interfere with a simple application to Jesus Christ. And this was the method of many other pious spirits in those ages. The reader is desired to observe, however, that we have found the essential and lead-

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* See 11th Article of Religion.

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ing doctrine of real Christianity in the possession of Anselm: and hence we are at no loss to account for the superior piety and virtue which rendered him the ornament of the times in which he lived, though they exempted him not from the common frailty of being seduced by the prejudices of education. The inestimable benefit of reading, and meditating on the divine word with prayer, may, from this example, be inferred. Such reading and meditation were the delight and employment of Anselm through life; and he found the word of God a light to his feet, and a lantern to his paths.

Hence also it is not to be wondered at that he should so seriously oppose the anti-trinitarian refinements of Roscelin. He, who finds relief to his own mind in the death of Christ, can never behold with indifference the attacks made on the dignity of Christ's person. And though, in that rude age, men had not, so commonly as in our times, learned to express a contempt for the Scriptures, yet there were those, who ridiculed and pretended to argue against their divine inspiration. The zeal of Anselm, who lived for eternity, by faith in Christ, was induced to oppose these attempts, in a work intitled "The Fool refuted*." The ingenuity and acuteness of the archbishop were displayed with good effect in this treatise. It is proper to observe, also, that this great man was the real inventor of the argument, erroneously attributed to Descartes, which undertakes to prove the existence of God from the idea of infinite perfection, which is to be found, without exception, in every man's mind†.

Thus did Anselm employ himself in the defence of divine truth and serious religion. His knowledge of the Scriptures was, I am persuaded, so sound, and his love of them so sincere, that if he had met

* Liber adversus insipientem.——See Mac.'s transl. of Mosheim, Vol. I. Cent. XI. p. 530. Quarto edition.

† See Id. p. 483.

with direct opposition, on these infinitely momentous subjects, from the court of Rome, he would have sooner pronounced the pope to be Antichrist, than have parted with his evangelical sentiments and profession. But the course of events threw him into such circumstances, that it became the temporal interest of the court of Rome to cherish and honour the archbishop. CENT. XI.

Hear with what seriousness he expresses his views concerning his own justification before God. "I am conscious that I deserve damnation, and my repentance suffices not for satisfaction; but certain it is that thy mercy abounds above all offences*."

The works of this great prelate are partly scholastical, partly devotional. Taken together, they demonstrate him to have been eminently endowed with genius and piety. Like Augustine, whom he seems to have followed as his model, he abounds both in profound argumentation on the most abstruse and difficult subjects, and in devout and fervent meditations on practical godliness. But it will not be so much adapted to the purpose of this history to analyze his tracts, as to give some detached passages on matters of real Christian importance.

In his treatise on the reason why God became man†, he says, "I see that the man whom we seek as qualified to be our Mediator must be of this description; he must not die of necessity, because he must be omnipotent; nor of debt, because he must not be a sinner; and yet he must die voluntarily, because it was necessary that he should do so, as Mediator."—"As it is necessary that man should satisfy for the sin of man, therefore none could make satisfaction, but he who was properly man, Adam himself, or one of his race. That Adam himself could satisfy was impossible ‡."

He thus expresses his admiration, while he me-

* Anselm's Meditations. † Cur deus homo, Lib. 2. C. 11.
‡ Idem. C. 8.

CHAP. V.

ditates on the power of the cross*. "O hidden fortitude! that a man hanging on the cross should suspend eternal death, which oppressed mankind! That a man, nailed to the cross, should overcome the world, and punish its wicked powers with everlasting destruction. O secret powers! that a man, condemned with robbers, should save men condemned with devils; that a man extended on a cross should draw all things to himself! O secret virtue! that one, expiring in agony, should draw innumerable souls from hell; that man should undertake the death of the body, and destroy the death of souls!"

Speaking of the humiliation of Christ†, he observes, "He assumed poverty, yet lost not his riches; rich within, poor without. God was latent in riches; man was apparent in poverty.—By that blood we have lost the rags of iniquity, that we might be clothed with the g[illegible] and you see in [illegible]tality. Lest we should not d[illegible]ntial in godliness. erty to approach him, who has [illegible]y of sentiment· hand, he exhibited himself poor; th[illegible] and God condescended to take upon him our nature. That man might return to internal, spiritual riches, God condescended to appear outwardly poor. We should have wanted at least one proof of his tender love to us, unless he had taken upon him our poverty, and he himself had sustained, for a time, that indigence, from which he delivers us."

The reader, from these specimens, may form some idea of the felicity of thought, which enabled this prelate to unite practical devotion with scholastic theology, and to educe the most cogent motives to gratitude and pious affections from those mysterious doctrines, which have ever been esteemed, by wise and holy men, the special glory of Christianity.

The following thought seems to throw no small light on some of the most sublime ideas of Scripture:

* De Medit. reddente hum. C. 1. † On 2 Cor. viii.

He has his eye on the first chapter to the Ephesians. CENT. XI.
"In the revelation of the mystery of our Lord's incarnation, the angels themselves received an advancement of dignity. Even their joy was increased, when they began to receive men into their fellowship. Christ indeed died not for angels; nevertheless, the fruits of his redemption tend to their benefit. The enmity, which sin had caused between the angelic and human nature, is done away; and even from the redemption of men the loss of the ancient angelic ruin is repaired. Thus heavenly and earthly things are renewed: those, however, only, who were in Christ elected and predestinated before the foundation of the world, obtain this benefit. For in him t[redacted] were and are, whom God hath chosen f[redacted] virtue and efficacy of the sac[redacted]s expresses*: "Christ was ma[redacted]crifice for sin. For, in [redacted] are offered for sins, are call[redacted]st is called sin, because he was offered for sin.—He hath blotted out all sin, original and actual; hath fulfilled all righteousness, and opened the kingdom of heaven.—By one offering he perfects for ever†: for, to the end of the world, that victim will be sufficient for the cleansing of all his people. If they sin a thousand times, they need no other Saviour, because this suffices for all things, and cleanses every conscience from sin." I need not say of a man so holy and upright, that he meant not to encourage sin, while he magnifies the savour of divine peace, through the blood of Christ, which his own conscience had experienced.

"Though‡ all who were to be saved could not be present when Christ made that redemption, yet so great was the virtue of that death, that its effects

* On 2 Cor. v. † Heb. x. ‡ B. II. Cur Deus homo. C. 16.

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are extended to those who are absent or remote, in regard to place and time."

Hear how divinely he speaks of the Holy Spirit and his operations. "The Holy Spirit is evidently declared to be God*, because, unless he were God, he would not have a temple. He breathed on them, and said unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost†. As if he had said: As ye perceive this breath,—by which I intimate to you the Holy Spirit, as spiritual objects are intimated by sensible things,—to proceed from my body, so know that the Holy Spirit proceeds from my Person, even from the secret of my Deity." An interpretation worthy of him, who confuted the Greeks in the article of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the S[redacted]l every precious fundamental of Chr[redacted]s in his writings. Remove the [redacted], and view the inward man; [redacted]m all that is vital and esse[redacted]is he content with orthodo[redacted]. how he pants after God, [redacted]mm to apply, by prayer, for the power of the doctrine which we profess‡. Draw me, Lord, into thy love. As thy creature, I am thine altogether; make me to be so in love. See, Lord, before thee is my heart: it struggles; but, of itself, it can effect nothing. Do thou what it cannot do. Admit me into the secret chamber of thy love. I ask, I seek, I knock. Thou, who causest me to ask, cause me to receive. Thou givest me to seek, give me to find. Thou teachest me to knock, open to me knocking. To whom dost thou give, if thou deniest him who askest? Who finds, if he that seeks is disappointed? To whom dost thou open, if thou shuttest to him that knocks? What dost thou give to him, who

* On 1 Cor. vi. † De processu Spiritus.

‡ De Meditat. Cap. 7.

prays not, if thou deniest thy love to him who prays? From thee I have the desire: Oh, may I have the fruition! Stick close to him; stick close, importunately, my soul." Let this suffice as a specimen of those groanings which cannot be uttered *, of which the breast of Anselm was conscious, and which, in every age of the Church, have been known by the real people of God. These groanings are too much neglected even where they are not altogether contemned among men; but they are delightful in the ears of the heavenly host, and inferior only in harmony to the praises of just men made perfect. CENT. XI.

This holy personage appears, from his comments on the 5th, 6th, and 7th Chapters to the Romans, to have understood the right use of the Law and the Gospel; the power and pollution of indwelling sin; its augmentation in the heart from the irritation of the law which forbids evil; and the real and solid relief from guilt, by the grace of Jesus Christ. These subjects are well understood, that is, sufficiently for all practical purposes, even by persons who have no pretensions to skill in languages or criticism; provided they have felt the lost condition of fallen man, and have been taught by the Spirit of God, in an effectual manner, to apply the medicine of the Gospel: whereas they are altogether hidden from the wise and prudent of this world †; from men, who may possess much learning and acuteness, and who trust in the strength of their own knowledge and acquirements; but whose hearts have never been truly humbled, or opened ‡ to the reception of spiritual knowledge. The Apostle of the Gentiles was divinely commissioned to explain the important points; and I find Anselm to have known them experimentally; but, let it suffice just to have men-

* Romans viii. 26.
† 1 Corin. i. 19.
‡ Acts xvi. 14.

CHAP. V.

tioned these things in this place. They have been copiously illustrated by many writers since the Reformation. So various, however, and so abundant was the knowledge of Anselm in the divine life, that he wrote with no less precision on practical, than on mysterious subjects. Observe, for instance, how justly he describes the evil of rash judgment*. "There are two cases in which we ought to guard against rash judgment, first, when the intention of him, whom we are disposed to blame, is uncertain; secondly, when it is uncertain how the person will turn out in THE END, who is the present object of censure. A person, for instance, refuses to fast, complaining of his bodily infirmities; if you, disbelieving him, impute his refusal to a spirit of intemperance, you are guilty of the sin of rash judgment. Moreover, though his gluttony be unquestionably evident, yet if you censure him, as if his recovery to holiness were impossible, you are guilty of censoriousness. Let us not then censure things which are DUBIOUS, as if they were CERTAIN; nor reprehend even MANIFEST evils in such a manner, as to represent them absolutely INCURABLE. Of uncertain things, those are most prone to judge rashly who take more delight in inveighing against what is amiss than in correcting it: and the vice of censoriousness itself may be traced up either to pride or to envy."

On the awful subject of predestination his views are similar to those of Augustine. Suffice it to quote a single sentence. "It cannot be investigated why God comes to this man in the way of mercy, to that in the way of justice. For no creature can decide why he hath mercy on this person, rather than on that †."

In his comments on the fifth Chapter of the

* On Rom. xiv. † On Rom. xi.

Epistle to the Romans, he beautifully illustrates the all-important doctrine of justification by faith in Christ; on which subject it may suffice to produce a single quotation from one of his systematical treatises *. "If, as it is evident, the heavenly city must receive its complete number from the human race in addition to the angels who fell not, and if this be impossible without a satisfaction made to the divine Justice, if God alone can make this satisfaction, if man is bound in justice to make it, it follows that the Saviour must be God-man." So clearly were the essentials of salvation discerned, in one of the darkest periods of the Church: and there is not an humble soul, in any age, who seeks out the works of the Lord with admiration and delight, but he will join with the pious archbishop in his meditation. "The wicked sins, and the just is punished; the impious offends, and the pious is condemned; what the servant perpetrates, the master compensates; in fine, the evil which man commits, of that evil Christ endures the punishment †." It would carry me too far to transcribe all his devout reflections and meditations on these subjects. One remark, however, which glances at the great corruption of doctrine, that originated from the mistaken philosophy of free-will ‡, should not be omitted. "If natural possibility by free-will, as the wise of this

CENT. XI.

* Cur Deus homo. B. 2. C. 6. † B. Meditat.

‡ I have used the term FREE-WILL in this, and in some other places, in compliance with custom, though the expression leads to a confusion of ideas on the subject.—It is as absurd to talk of the freedom of the will, as of the freedom of liberty: for, we can have no other rational idea of freedom in men's actions, but that of their being VOLUNTARY.—If men act voluntarily, they act freely; responsibility is attached to what is VOLUNTARY, provided the subject be of sound understanding. When men do as they please, they are answerable for their conduct. This is a simple state of the case.—See Locke's Essay on Hum. Und. and Edwards on Free-will.

CHAP. VI.

world say, be sufficient unto salvation, both for knowledge and for practice, then Christ is dead in vain, and his cross is of none effect. But so surely as human salvation depends on the cross, so surely is that secular wisdom convicted of folly, which knows not the virtue of the cross, and substitutes a phantom of human merit and ability in its room *."

"We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery," says St. Paul. The real doctrine of salvation needs, therefore, a stronger light than the world, weak and distempered in discernment as it is by sin, can endure. Hence it always appears foolish to the natural man. Are we to wonder, therefore, that men of secular wisdom should despise it? That they should call the ideas of St. Paul, which Anselm illustrates, jejune, systematical, abstruse, unintelligible? That they should pronounce the Christian experience, which has those ideas for its basis, illusory, fanatical, and visionary? There have not been wanting, however, men of sound intellect and of solid learning, in every age, who have found the Gospel of Christ to be the power of God to salvation. Anselm was one of these. Amidst the gloom of superstition with which he was surrounded, he was yet enabled to describe, and vindicate every fundamental of evangelical doctrine: though a papist, he appeals to the Scriptures: he expounds them, by opening the plain, grammatical sense of St. Paul; and it behoves men, who call themselves protestants, or who boast of the superior light of this age, to confute his arguments, or at least to own that they do not believe the Scriptures to be divine. If original sin be a true doctrine, it is to be expected, that men leaning to their own understanding would reject the doctrine of the remedy for a disease which they do not feel. If the fever of pride have caused men to lose all sense of their

* On 1 Cor. i.

fallen condition, ought their reasonings to be regarded by those who feel what that condition is, and to what a state of misery sin has reduced them? If human powers, by the natural exertion of the will, exclusively of grace, be indeed sufficient to guide men into the way of salvation, then the principle of effectual grace through the mediation of Christ, and by the influence of the Holy Spirit, is doubtless unnecessary. Let experience therefore decide by the fruits. Schemes and theories of doctrine, either wholly or partly subversive of all ideas of grace, have long been patronized by persons of great celebrity in the Christian world. What have these schemes and theories done for mankind? Who, among these philosophers, can be compared, I will not say with many protestant divines, but even with Anselm, who lived, under a cloud of superstitious disadvantages, in humility, sincerity, piety, charity, and heavenly-mindedness? It is allowed, even by his enemies, that his life was in the right: and all the true holiness of practice which has appeared in the world, has ever originated from such doctrines as he professed. What has been the consequence of doctrines grafted on human merit and ability, but an inundation of vice and wickedness? We have lived, indeed, to see this consequence exhibited in full perfection in France. Since Christian ideas were almost exploded there, that country has been one vast theatre of all that is execrable among men. Even the military success of those infidels has only propagated misery; and their triumphs, like those of Satan, while they multiply the calamities of others, add only a fresh accumulation to their own. Is it the same thing to forbid crimes, as to prevent them, ye innovators without discernment*? Is it the same thing to

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* The innovators here alluded to were continually, IN WORDS, forbidding crimes, and exhorting citizens to be or-

CHAP. V. despise the wisdom of antiquity, as to understand it, ye philosophers without learning?

To those then who will not lend a patient ear to Christian doctrine, we say, it is divine; it has proved itself so to be in every age; the proofs of it lie open before you, examine, and confute if you can. And among these proofs we adduce one of no mean importance, namely, that the Gospel stands recommended as the medicine of our nature by its holy effects. However you may dislike it in its principles, you must own, if at all attentive to matter of fact, that it teaches men in real practice to live soberly, righteously, and godly; and that the farther men remove from its system in their views of religion, the more rampant do they grow in wickedness and immorality.

Reflections of this sort should teach men to inquire, with serious and humble reverence, both into the nature and evidences of Christianity; and persons who feel at all the force of these, or similar observations, will find it their duty to pray devoutly for the divine influences. In this spirit of devotion Anselm excelled; and a few quotations tending to illustrate it shall close this article. There were some others in the eleventh century who lived and who wrote in a similar taste; but his eminent superiority over them all will justify me in omitting the account of their works *.

derly, &c.; while, IN FACT, they taught them to hate and despise the true preventives of crimes, viz. an effective government, a strong police, and, above all, the doctrine of the eternal punishments of the wicked.—All this time the multiplication of the most flagitious enormities was forming a sea without a shore, which at length swallowed up the preachers themselves.—Such are the effects of chimerical philosophy, and of the contempt of ANCIENT wisdom!

* It may, perhaps, be not improper to mention Bruno, the founder of the severe order of Carthusians. He was born at Cologne, was chancellor of the diocese of Rheims, and doctor of divinity there. He with two other canons prosecuted Manasses, archbishop of Cologne, for simony, in 1077. Manasses,

He, who in the following manner, breathes out his soul in prayer, through the Intercessor and Mediator between God and man, and so seriously rejects the hope of any other advocate than the Son of God, could not really confide in the Virgin Mary, or any saint or angel, but must have rested in Christ alone, however difficult it may be to explain the consistency of his sentiments with the fashionable superstitions of the times, the infection of which he by no means escaped entirely. CENT. XI.

"Thus, Father Almighty, I implore thee by the love of thy Almighty Son; bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks to thy name: Free me from the bonds of sin; I ask this of thee by the only co-eternal Son: and by the intercession of thy dearly beloved Son who sitteth at thy right hand, graciously restore to life a wretch, over whom, through his own demerits, the sentence of death impends. To what other intercessor I can have recourse, I know not, except to Him who is the propitiation for our sins *. That the only begotten Son should undertake to intercede for me with the eternal Father, demonstrates him to be man; and that he should succeed in his intercession shows that the human nature is taken into union with the majesty of the Deity †."

in a rage, brake open and plundered the houses of the canons, and sold their prebends. He was, however, legally deposed. Bruno was offered the vacant archbishopric, but preferred a state of solitude. He is said, also, to have refused the archbishopric of Reggio. Notwithstanding the uncommon austerities of the order, which he instituted, he was obliged to attend Pope Urban II. formerly his scholar at Rheims. He was learned in Greek and Hebrew, and in the writings of the fathers, particularly Ambrose and Augustine; he followed the system of the latter concerning grace; wrote on the Psalter and St. Paul's Epistles; and seems to have been unquestionably pious and heavenly-minded. See Butler, Vol. X.

* De Vestiment. † Chap. viii. Rom.

CHAP. V.

He addresses the Son of God as "the Redeemer of captives, the Saviour of the lost, the hope of exiles, the strength of the distressed, the enlarger of the enslaved spirit, the sweet solace and refreshment of the mournful soul, the crown of conquerors, the only reward and joy of all the citizens of heaven, the copious source of all grace*."

The Holy Spirit he thus addresses in the same treatise. "Thee, Holy Spirit, I implore, if through my weakness I have a very imperfect understanding of the truth of thy majesty, and if, through the concupiscence of sinful nature, I have neglected to obey the Lord's precepts when understood, that thou wouldst condescend to enlighten me with thy visitation, that through thee, whom I have called upon as my succour, in the dangerous ocean of life, I may, without shipwreck, arrive at the shore of a blessed immortality."

Could the pious spirit, who believes and longs for the rest which remains for the people of God, express its most ardent breathings in language more adapted to her frame than the following? "Hasten the time, my Saviour and my God, when what I now believe I may see with eyes uncovered; what I now hope and reverence at a distance, I may apprehend; what I now desire, according to the measure of my strength, I may affectionately embrace in the arms of my soul, and that I may be wholly absorbed in the abyss of thy love†!"

After having uttered many petitions ‡, he says, "I have asked many good things, my Creator, though I have deserved many evils. Not only I have no claim on thee for these good things, but I have merited exquisite punishments. But the case of publicans, harlots, and robbers, in a moment snatched from the jaws of the enemy, and received

* Spec. Sermo Evang. C. 19. † Id. Chap. 18.
‡ B. Medit.

in the bosom of the Shepherd, animates my soul with a cheering hope." CENT. XI.

With so intuitive a glance of Christian faith does he console his soul!—It is in the same way that divine mercy is apprehended by all humble and penitent spirits. The person of Christ, and the doctrine of justification by him alone, are the objects and supports of confidence in God.

CENTURY XII.

CHAP. I.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE LIFE OF BERNARD.

CHAP. I.

A GREAT luminary strikes our attention at the entrance of this century—the famous Bernard, abbot of Clairval. As the general scene of our history still continues dark and gloomy, let us stick close to the splendid object. At least I would wish to exhibit a just estimate of the life, character, and writings of this renowned saint. For the subject may not only throw a considerable light on the religion and manners of this century, but will also illustrate that connexion between Christian doctrine and practice, which it is the principal design of this work to explore from age to age.

There was a time when Bernard was idolized throughout Europe; while he lived, his word was a law; and, for ages after his death, he was scarcely thought to have been capable either of fault or mistake. But the public taste has long since deviated into the other extreme, and it will behove me to say a few words, with a view to combat that power of prejudice, by which most minds are apt to be carried down the torrent of fashion.

Bernard was doubtless a very ardent champion of the popes of Rome; I mean, of their office, not of their personal characters. He inveighed against the vices of the men, and the various evils of their

ecclesiastical administration. But he supported their pretensions to the chair of St. Peter, and opposed with vehemence all who withstood those pretensions. FORGIVE HIM THIS WRONG: it was common to him with the Christian world; and the great Saxon Reformer, who, four hundred years after, could see at length, though by slow degrees, the wickedness and folly of the whole established system under which he had been strictly educated, has ever been looked on as a prodigy.

In superstition also Bernard was unhappily involved all his days: it was the evil of the times. His austerities have, with nauseous punctuality, been recited by his panegyrists *. They might have spared their accounts, as they themselves confess that he afterwards owned he was in an error, both in injuring his own health, and in exacting too much of labour and sufferings from his disciples. Nor is the sincerity of Bernard to be doubted, either in his juvenile zeal, or in his candid and frank confession of his faults †. He even accused himself of sacrilege, because by his indiscreet excesses he had rendered himself almost unfit to serve God and the Church. And though the weakness of his frame continued till death, as the consequence of the injuries which his body had received by his austerities, he seems to have taken some care of health in the latter part of his life.

But the strongest prejudices which we are inclined to admit against him in our times, are derived from his supposed miracles, and from his real attachment to the cause of the Crusades.

In truth, I was disgusted with the tedious perusal of his miracles, with not one of which do I mean to trouble the reader. But Bernard was

* These are several; the lives of Bernard, which they wrote, are at the close of the 2d Vol. of his Works; which are in two folios. I use the Parisian edition of Mabillon.

† Vol. II. p. 1094.

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canonized: it was therefore necessary, by the etiquette of the Roman See, that a Saint should work miracles; and no wonder, when the interests of all parties concerned were favourable to fraud, and when credulity was a general evil, that miracles should be feigned, be circumstantially related, and be implicitly believed. Thus Ignatius, the father of the Jesuits, was said, sixty years after his death, to have wrought miracles; though in his life, published fifteen years after that event, no mention is made of any. Our king Henry III. was reported to have wrought a miracle after his death, at his tomb. He, also, might have been added to the Roman Calendar, if the imposture had not been detected and exposed by the vigour and sagacity of his son Edward I*. Let Bernard, then, be acquitted of wilful blame on this head, though his panegyrists, it must be owned, have written as absurdly concerning him as if they had intended to disgrace his character.

Of the policy of the Crusades my judgment is not the same as concerning their justice. In the beginning of this century prodigious armies marched out of Europe, to take possession of the Holy Land; and, notwithstanding the repeated calamities which attended their progress, the princes of the west still persevered in the attempt. That they should single out Palestine as the scene of their military exploits was fanatical and superstitious. The great inconveniences to which they were invitably exposed, on account of the immense distances from their respective countries, and the want of all political and prudential wisdom in their plans, are evident; and, in the event, Europe suffered the punishment of their temerity and folly. Add to this, that the improvident waste of so much human blood, on so fantastic an object, and the mixture of

* Fox's B. of Martyrs, Vol. I. 399.

profane wickedness with absurd superstition in the Crusaders, rendered their characters, on the whole, as reprehensible as they were ridiculous. But when the precise question is asked, Whether they had a just cause against the Mahometans, I cannot decide, with the generality of modern historians, against them. Perhaps we have too hastily admitted the truth of the accounts which infidel writers, of no very accurate information, have given of the virtues of the Arabians. It is very evident, that in the wars between them and the Christians, the rules of justice and humanity were more frequently and more atrociously violated by the former than by the latter. Even the very degenerate Christianity, which had then for ages obtained, produced a degree of social virtue unknown to the followers of Mahomet. A savage pride, a sanguinary malice, and a shameless perfidy, marked, with very few exceptions, the general conduct of men, whom Voltaire, with insidious candour, prefers to their Christian adversaries. It should be remembered, that the Mahometans, from the first publication of the Koran, asserted a divine claim to universal empire; and in their creed unbelieving nations are continually threatened with the loss of their religion, their lives, or at least their liberties. In the eleventh century, the Turks, the successors of the Arabians, both in regard to their empire and their religion, had, in less than thirty years, subdued Asia, as far as the Hellespont*. Yet the same author who gives us this information says the charge alleged against the Mahometans, of looking on it as a duty to extirpate all religions by the sword, is confuted by the Koran, by the history of the Mussulman conquerors, and by the toleration of Christian worship. This observation seems scarcely consistent with the former. To live in slavery, under the Mahometan

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* Gibbon's Decline, C. 58. V. 6.

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yoke, was all the indulgence granted to the Christians who sunk beneath their arms; and as they realized this doctrine at one time, even to the straits of Gibraltar, as the pilgrims to the Holy Land were exposed to many insults, robberies, and extortions, as both Saracens and Turks acted, from age to age, on the maxims of original Mahometanism, and as, at length, for want of a proper union of the European princes in stemming the torrent, they desolated a great part of Europe itself, it seems agreeable to the law of nations to conclude, that the Christian powers had a right to resist their ambitious pretensions. If this state of the case be just, it is sufficient to vindicate Bernard from the charge of iniquity in encouraging and promoting the Crusades. This is enough for my purpose: he might, and he doubtless did, mean well in his exhortations on this head; and, it is only to be wished that the enterprize of the Christian princes had been conducted on the plan of defensive prudence, rather than of offensive military enthusiasm. I am not however called on to vindicate Bernard as a politician, but to illustrate his Christian principles.

Birth of Bernard, A. D. 1091.

Bernard was born at Fontaine, a village of Burgundy, in the year 1091, and was the son of Tecelinus*, a military nobleman, renowned for piety, at least according to the ideas of religion prevalent at that time. The same character is given of his mother Aleth. She had seven children, of whom Bernard was the third. From his infancy he was devoted to religion and study, and made a rapid proficiency in the learning of the times. He took an early resolution to retire from the world, and engaged all his brothers and several of his friends in the same monastic views with himself. The most rigid rules were agreeable to his inclination: and hence he became a Cistertian, the strictest of the

* Life of Bernard by Gulielmus, 1077.

orders in France. The Cisterians were at that time but few in number: men were discouraged from uniting with them on account of their excessive austerities. Bernard, however, by his superior genius, his eminent piety, and his ardent zeal, gave to this order a lustre and a celebrity which their institution by no means deserved. At the age of twenty-three, with more than thirty companions, he entered into the monastery. Other houses of the order arose soon after, and he himself was appointed abbot of Clairval*. To those novitiates who desired admission, he used to say, "If ye hasten to those things which are within, dismiss your bodies, which ye brought from the world; let the spirits alone enter; the flesh profiteth nothing." Strange advice this may seem, and very different from the meekness and facility which our Saviour exhibited towards young disciples†. Nor would it be worth while to have mentioned it at all, but that it evinces the extreme disadvantages which then attended the pursuit of religious knowledge, and the cultivation of piety. Yet, amidst all these disagreeable austerities, the soul of Bernard was inwardly taught of God; and as he grew in the divine life he gradually learned to correct the harshness and asperity of his sentiments. Finding the novitiates to be terrified at his severe declarations, he used to preach to them the mortification of carnal concupiscence, and lead them on with a mildness and clemency, which, however, he did not exercise toward himself. He injured his health exceedingly by austerities, and, as he afterwards confessed, threw a stumbling-block in the way of the weak, by exacting of them a degree of perfection which he himself had not attained. He had induced all his brethren to follow his example of retirement. They were five in number: and his only sister still remained in the

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* Life of Bernard, 1085. † Matthew ix. 14.

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world, who, coming to visit the brethren in the monastery, in the dress and with the attendance of a lady of quality, found herself treated with such neglect, that bursting into tears, she said, "though I am a sinner, nevertheless for such Christ died." Bernard, moved with an expression so truly evangelical, remitted his severity, gave her directions suited to the taste of the age, and, probably, still better advice. But of that the miserable writer, whom I follow, says nothing. External austerities are, as it were, the whole of his theology, and having told us, that Bernard's sister became a nun, and resembled her brothers in piety, he dismisses her from his narrative*.

Bernard, however, having reduced himself to the greatest weakness by his absurd excesses, and being obliged to take more care of his health, was humbled under a sense of his folly, and frankly confessed it in the strongest terms†. He recovered his strength, and began to exert himself by preaching, and travelling from place to place, for the real good of mankind. It is wonderful to observe, with what authority he reigned in the hearts of men of all ranks, and how his word became a law to princes and nobles. His eloquence, indeed, was very great; but that alone could never have given him so extensive a dominion. His sincerity and humility were eminent, and his constant refusal of the highest ecclesiastical dignities, for which he was, doubtless, as well qualified as any person of his time, gave, in his circumstances, an unequivocal testimony to the uprightness of his character: I say,—in his circumstances,—for I would by no means insinuate, that the acceptance of the highest ecclesiastical dignities manifests, in all cases, a spirit of avarice or ambition. The bishoprics of Genoa, Milan, and Rheims, were among those which he refused to accept.

* Life of Bernard, 1090. † Id. 1094.

During a schism, which happened in the Church of Rome, the authority of Bernard determined both Lewis VI. king of France, and Henry I. king of England, to support the claims of Innocent II. This is one instance, among many, of his influence, which was employed in various negotiations, for the good of the Church, as he thought; but of which the detail is very foreign to the views of this history. CENT. XII.

That which eminently marked the character of Bernard, amidst the profusion of honours heaped on his character throughout Europe, was his undissembled humility. Though no potentate, whether civil or ecclesiastical, possessed such real power as he did in the Christian world, and though he was the highest in the judgment of all men, he was nevertheless, in his own estimation, the lowest. He said, and he felt what he said; namely, that he had neither the will nor the power to perform the services for which he was so much extolled, but was wholly indebted to the influence of divine grace. At intervals, from the employments of ecclesiastical affairs, he meditated on the subject of the Book of Canticles. The love of Christ towards his Church, his great condescension towards it, though sullied and dishonoured by sin, the reciprocal affection also of the Church toward the divine Saviour, the prelibations of his love afforded toward her, varied however with anxieties and interruptions, these subjects engaged his attention, and he wrote on them in that manner which experience only can dictate *.

Another writer of Bernard's life tells us †, of the excellent dignitaries of the Church, who had received their education in the monastery of Clairval. But as I know nothing of any of them, except one, it must suffice to mention him, pope Eugenius III.

* Life of Bernard, 1123.

† 1127. Life of Bernard, by Ernald.

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From a monk he rose to that height of ecclesiastical dignity; and he still practised the austerities of the convent so far as his exalted station admitted; and we have yet extant five books, addressed to him by Bernard, written with that air of genuine piety and sincerity, which showed that the abbot was no respecter of persons. The pope himself was irreproachable in his manners, continued to reverence the abbot, was zealous toward God, and appears to have far excelled the generality of popes. For the worst thing that can be said of Eugenius was, that he seems to have had no scruples in accepting the popedom. But it is not for man to say how great a quantity of ignorance and superstition is compatible with the existence of genuine piety. Eugenius was raised to the pontificate in the year 1145, and governed nine years in a state of splendid misery. Feuds and factions convulsed his government, and he was obliged to fly from Rome into France, to avoid the fury of his enemies. It was probably a blessing in the disguise of afflictions that he was never allowed to taste the sweets of power and grandeur.

Eugenius III. becomes pope, A. D. 1145.

Theobald, count of Blois, elder brother to Stephen king of England, was also much guided by the counsels of Bernard, and he was surely a very extraordinary character. Though a powerful prince, he lived in abstemiousness, simplicity, and plainness. Nothing indecent was permitted to be said * or done in his presence. His care and munificence in relieving the afflicted was wonderful: in a famine he opened his store-houses to the poor: his life, in short, was devoted to the service of mankind: and I hope, that agreeably to Ernald's observation, he laid up treasures above. We must, however, be content with details of external things from a writer, who gives no account of the inward vital godliness of his heroes. Theobald also had his share of afflictions,

* Life of Bernard, by Ernald, 1129.

though the account of their nature, and of his relief from them at last, is beyond measure obscure. CENT. XII.

The talents of Bernard in preaching, were, doubtless, of the first order. He possessed that variety of gifts which fitted him either to address the great or the vulgar. He knew how to improve conversation to salutary purposes, and to overrule the frivolous trifling of a company by introducing something serious, which yet was of an inviting and an agreeable nature. At the command of the pope, and at the request of other bishops, he was wont to preach in various places; and the impressions left on the congregations, who crowded from all parts to hear him, demonstrated the powers of his eloquence*.

The Crusade of Lewis VII. called the younger, was supported by the eloquent voice of Bernard, who unhappily prevailed to draw numbers to join that monarch in his absurd expedition, which was in its consequences pregnant with misery and ruin †. If we had no other apologies for Bernard, than those very absurd ones suggested by Gaufrid, it must be confessed, he would be totally inexcusable. But in the review of his works we shall have occasion to hear the abbot speak for himself.

CHAP. II.

BERNARD'S DEFENCE OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH AGAINST ABELARD.

THE merits of the controversy between these two great men, can scarcely be appreciated, without some previous review of the life and transactions of the latter. Peter Abelard was born in Brittanny, in the year 1079 ‡. He was, doubtless, a man of

Peter Abelard born, A. D. 1079.

* Life of Bernard, by Gaufrid. † Id. 1137.

‡ I have been obliged to Mr. Berington's history of this man, for the arrangement of certain facts and circumstances.

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genius, industry, and learning. In early life he was put under the tuition of Roscelin, an acute logician, already mentioned, who, incorporating his philosophical subtilties with Christian ideas, departed from the simplicity of the faith, and, toward the close of the foregoing century, was condemned for tritheism.

Abelard needed not the instructions of such a master, in order to learn the arts of self-sufficiency. Confident and presumptuous by nature, elated with applause, and far too haughty to submit to the simple truth, as it is revealed in Scripture, he was, from the moment that he applied himself to the study of the sacred writings, ardently disposed to embrace heretical singularities. After he had appeared in a very splendid light in the schools of philosophy, and had been equally distinguished by his acuteness and by his contentious spirit, he attended the lectures of * Anselm in divinity. What sort of lectures they were we are not told, but I have not the worse opinion of them from the supercilious contempt with which Abelard spake of them. He himself had given very little attention to the sacred books, and yet very speedily decided against his teacher, pronounced him void of reason and common sense, and declared, that, with the assistance of an easy expositor, the Scriptures were perfectly intelligible to any one, who had the smallest pretensions to literature. "Are you equal to the work of expounding the Scriptures?" said his companions. "I am ready," said he: "choose any book which you please, from the Old or New Testament, and allow me a single commentator."

I scarcely need to say, that I am constrained to differ, *toto cœlo*, from him in sentiments. Nor is it possible that it should be otherwise, where two persons have scarcely one common principle of theology in which they agree.

* This person must not be confounded with the famous archbishop of Canterbury of that name.

They instantly fixed on the most difficult of all the prophets, Ezekiel. He studied that night, and next morning declared that he was prepared to expound the prophet: "for it is not by leisure," said he, "but by energy of genius, that I undertake to master the sciences." He exhibited himself in public, lectured repeatedly on Ezekiel, and was admired by his ignorant auditories. CENT. XII.

Hitherto every thing seems to be a modern scene. The same juvenile confidence, supported by the same ignorance of themselves, and the same depraved nature, has formed many Socinian and Pelagian preachers and writers in our times, who, between the age of twenty and thirty, have despised the wisdom of antiquity, and the authority of men most justly renowned for good sense, learning, and holiness, and have committed themselves to the direction of plausible and presumptuous innovators, who are often sufficiently artful in beguiling the unwary. One of their most successful devices is, they pretend to teach young students of divinity how to think for themselves. It is remarkable, however, that we very seldom find any of those who have gone to visit the sick lion, return from his den. A self-confident spirit naturally leads the mind into opinions the most daringly subversive of the Gospel, as well as into a course of life the most opposite to its precepts. And when a man has begun to despise the influence of the Holy Spirit, he is awfully left at large to his own dark designs, and to the crafts of the prince of darkness. The connexion between doctrines and practice is close and exact. He, who thought highly of himself was easily disposed to think meanly of divine grace; and the best uses of the story of this miserable man are these, to teach youth to be modest, and to inform mankind, whether young or old, that the Scriptures should ever be studied with reverence, humility, and prayer.

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Abelard had the baseness to seduce a young woman, named Eloisa, who was brought up in Paris by her uncle. The names of both these persons are familar to those who have read our poet Pope, and it would be far remote from the plan of this history to enlarge on scenes of so flagitious a nature. Only the real principles of grace, I constantly find, are productive of holy practice. He, who has not seen the evil of sin in his own nature, and the preciousness of the grace of Christ, even while he boasts of his regard to moral virtue, will sport with iniquity, and call evil good, and good evil. The unhappy woman herself learned to glory in her shame, and professed that she thought it an honour to become the harlot of so renowned a person as Abelard. Sin deceives and hardens the heart incredibly; even holy David, for a season, felt its fascinating power; and nothing less than the influence of divine grace can subdue it. Blinded by lust, Abelard and Eloisa felt no remorse for their monstrous treatment of her uncle, whose confidence they abused, and whose kindness they repaid with the most vile and wicked ingratitude. In the mean time, Abelard studied and expounded the prophets, and continued to preach, not the Lord, but himself, as he had ever done. Happy had it been for the Christian world if there had been no more such theologians. But thus it is with men who speculate on religion at their ease, and make it a vehicle for their own advancement, honour, and wealth. With shameless versatility, they can at one time undertake to explain the Scriptures, at another gratify the lusts of the flesh. With men truly serious for their own souls it is not so: they may be slow in their advances in Christian science; but their steps are safe; and, while religion is by them brought to the test of experience, their conduct is preserved in uprightness.

I throw a veil over the particulars of the shameful story. Suffice it to say, that, in the issue, Abelard's

projects of ecclesiastical ambition were disappointed, and that both he and the unhappy woman retired into monastic obscurity. CENT. XII.

Ambition and the force of an active genius soon engaged Abelard again in theological inquiries. Of all the ancient fathers, Origen most suited his taste; and, mindful of the instructions of Roscelin, he began to philosophize in public on the doctrines of the Gospel, and composed, in three books, his Introduction to Theology; in which he attempted to render the mysteries of Christianity more agreeable to reason than they had been represented by the ancient fathers. The Trinity, in particular, he describes as a doctrine known to the ancient schools of philosophers, and revealed to them in recompense of their virtues. This is certainly a language very different from that of the Scriptures, which never mention philosophers, except with a view to guard against their seductions, and always represent their views as extremely abhorrent from the doctrines of the Gospel. The modern historian of Abelard is large and diffuse in describing the treatment which his hero met with, but desultory and indistinct in the account which he gives of his real sentiments. He asserts, however, that Abelard was persecuted without cause; that his book really contained nothing that was expressly heterodox; and while he positively and decidedly condemns the conduct of his adversaries, he gives his readers no sufficient data by which they may judge for themselves. But thus it is that heresy has ever been defended. While its WORDS DO EAT AS A CANKER, and gradually pervert the minds of the unwary, every charitable attempt to counteract the poison is treated as bigotry, illiberality, and fanaticism. The praise of good sense and sound argument is considered as appropriate to the heretic. He, at least, is allowed and encouraged to spread his doctrines with freedom, and to asperse the orthodox with the keenest invec-

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tive; while all who undertake to defend the plain sense of Scripture are stigmatized as persecutors. Scenes of this sort have, to the disgrace of human nature, been renewed from age to age: and so low and mean are the ideas of charity inculcated by those who call themselves liberal, that the real spiritual benefit of thousands seems to them scarcely an object of any magnitude, compared with the personal reputation of the applauded heretic.

Let us then endeavour to give, from the best evidences, a distinct view of the leading sentiments of Abelard, that we may be enabled to form a just idea of the controversy which at present engages our attention. I have drawn them from the history of Alexander Natalis*; and the testimonies both of Abelard himself, and of Bernard his opponent, are introduced into this account.

1. Abelard distinguished the persons of the Trinity in this manner. He described God the Father to be FULL POWER, the Son to be a CERTAIN POWER, the Holy Spirit to be NO POWER. He said, "the Son was to the Father as a CERTAIN POWER to power, as species to genus, as materiatum to materia, as man to an animal, as a brazen seal to brass."

I suppose, were I to translate the Latin words of this passage, for the sake of the less learned reader, I should make no addition to his stock of knowledge.

2. He represented the Holy Spirit to have proceeded from the Father and the Son, but not from the substance of the Father and the Son. Let this article pass as an unintelligible subtilty, if the reader please. The next speaks plainly a sentiment which strikes at the root of Christianity.

3. He denied that the devil ever had any commanding effective influence over man, and therefore

* Alexand. Nat. 12th Cent.

he denied that the Son assumed flesh for the sake of freeing man from the devil. God appeared, said he, in flesh, for no other end than for our instruction by word and example, nor did he suffer and die for any other reason, than to show and recommend his love toward us. I scarcely need to say, that this is the very essence of Socinianism. CENT. XII.

That I have not mistaken the meaning of Abelard will further appear from a view of his reasonings against the doctrine of atonement. "How is it possible that God should be reconciled to us by the death of his Son, since, in all reason, he ought to have been more incensed against men for the murder of his Son than for the violation of his precept by the eating of a single apple? If Adam's sin could not be expiated but by the death of Christ, what expiation could be made for the horrid crime of murdering Christ himself? Could the death of an innocent Son be so pleasing to God, that he would be reconciled to us men on the commission of it?—Who does not see, that it is cruel and unjust, that any one should require the blood of the innocent? How much less could God be so pleased with such an action, as to be reconciled on account of it to the whole world?" Thus far Abelard *. Socinians have never said any thing more specious. To those, who know how to reverence divine wisdom, and to submit to the express word of God, such reasonings will appear unworthy of an answer. What I am concerned for at present is, to state the fact, that Abelard was a heretic, that Bernard did not accuse him either unjustly or precipitately; and that the assertion of the historian of Abelard †, namely, that his hero "was not guilty of a single error," is altogether unfounded.

It may be proper to add, that Abelard, having set

* Bern. Vol. I. 647.

† History of Abelard and Eloisa, p. 278.

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aside the Scripture doctrine of an atonement, gives it as his opinion, that the real cause and design of Christ's incarnation was, that he might illuminate the world with the light of his wisdom, and inflame it to the love of God.

4. He affirmed that the Holy Spirit was the soul of the world. A phrase much used by the philosophers.

5. He asserted, that Christ, God and man, is not a third person in the Trinity, and that God is not properly to be called man.

6. That by free-will, without the help of grace, we can both will and perform that which is good, in direct contradiction to the seventh Chapter to the Romans.

7. That in the sacrifice of the altar, there remains, in the air, the form of the former substance.

8. That not the fault but the penalty of original sin is derived from Adam.

9. That there is no sin, except in the full consent of the man; and that consent attended with or implying a contempt of God.

10. That no sin is committed by concupiscence, inward delight in evil, or ignorance. However obscurely he expresses himself, he evidently lessens the demerit of sinful thoughts.

11. That diabolical suggestions are made, in a natural way on men, by the contact of stones and herbs, as the sagacious malice of evil spirits knows how to suit the various efficacy of these things to the production of various vices.

12. Faith he called an estimation or opinion of things not seen. "As if" says * Bernard, "a man might think and speak, in matters of faith, what he pleases, or, as if the Sacraments of our faith were not sure and certain in their nature. The Spirit

* I anticipate the sentiments of Bernard in this place: more of his arguments against Abelard will be given, when we come to the account of his opposition to the heretic.

itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are children of God. The whole object of faith is divinely confirmed by prophecies and miracles, established and consecrated by the incarnation, bloody death, and glorious resurrection of the Redeemer. How can any man give to so divine a principle as the faith of the Gospel, so low and mean a title as opinion, except one who hath not received the Holy Spirit, or who is ignorant of the Gospel, or who looks on it as a fable?" The difference between divine and human faith in the Christian religion is here not improperly stated by Bernard. CENT. XII.

13. In commenting on the epistle to the Romans, Abelard thus expresses himself: "Since the divine compassion, by bare intuition, could have freed man from the devil, what necessity, what reason, or what need was there, that, for our redemption, the Son of God should assume our nature, should sustain so many and so great miseries, and the painful and ignominious death of the Cross? To us the reason seems to be as follows,—that our justification by his blood, and our reconciliation to God, consisted in this singular grace exhibited to us, namely, in his taking upon him our nature, and in his persevering by word and example even to death, in instructing us*."

"Thus he drew his true disciples the more closely to himself by love. Our redemption, therefore, consists in that great love excited in us by the passion of Christ, which not only frees us from the servitude of sin, but gives us the liberty of the sons of God."

* Observe how the idea of atonement is excluded, to make way for that of instruction, while evangelical terms are still used. Some of the other articles are nugatory or obscure; this is palpably plain, and of essential importance in the controversy. In the same light the opposition which he makes, in a great degree, to the work of the Holy Spirit, is to be considered.

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In another place, he says, "Though our doctors, since the days of the Apostles, are of different sentiments, I think the devil had no effective power over man, except a permissive power from God, as a gaoler*, nor did the Son of God assume flesh that he might free men from slavery."

14. He asserts, that fresh continued influences of divine grace are not necessary to the production of every single good action, contrary to the plain sense of the parable of the vine and its branches, and our Lord's own explication of it in John xv.

I might add also another sentiment of Abelard; namely, "that God does no more for him who is saved, than for him who is not saved." He argues, that "if man be naturally more prone to evil than to good, his sins merit no blame; nay, that† God himself seems blamable for making him so weak and frail." Humble and intelligent Christians know how to answer; "Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" And, moreover, they will, with great truth, contend that such men as Abelard ought not to complain that the character of humble and sincere Christians is denied to them, and that their invectives against their opponents are not only unfounded, but also prove themselves to be void of integrity and candour, because they endeavour to impose on mankind by pretending to be what they are not.

On the whole, it seems impossible, that a man who had known any thing of the power of native depravity, should have advanced such sentiments as Abelard published to the world. Still, if he had kept his thoughts to himself, or had even been a modest inquirer, and proposed his doubts for the

* He plainly misrepresents the ancient doctors; none of whom assign any other sort of power to Satan: but by this misrepresentation he speciously introduces his opposition to the doctrine of the atonement.

† Bern. 647. Vol. I.

sake of information from persons better versed than himself in theological inquiries, his sentiments would have been no proper object of an ecclesiastical council. But Abelard had proceeded to assume the character of a teacher; and what fundamental doctrine of Christianity had he not opposed? The views of the Trinity had been either perverted under his hands, or confounded with the speculations of philosophers. The atonement of Christ, on which alone the hope and comfort of real Christians, in all ages, depends, had, in effect, been denied: the efficacious influence of divine grace had been asserted to be, in many cases at least, unnecessary; and the fallen state of man by nature had been excluded from his creed. If he had renounced the Christian name, at the same time that he renounced the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, he would have merited the character of an honest man; and, by separating himself from Christian society, would have prevented the weak and the unwary from being imposed on by his notions. But such candour and frankness seldom belong to the character of heretics: strict truth and plain dealing in religious matters are scarcely to be expected from any but those who are humble before God, and sanctified by his truth. Why Abelard chose still to call himself a Christian is obvious; his schools would have been deserted if he had acted openly and honestly. Unless then it can be proved that there are no fundamental truths of Scripture, or, that all sentiments are equally insignificant, it behoved the rulers of the Church, from every principle of piety and charity, to take cognizance of the growing heresy.

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A council was held at Soissons, and Abelard was summoned to appear. He was charged with tritheism, and with having asserted that God the Father was alone Almighty. He was ordered to burn his volumes, and to recite the symbol of

Council of Soissons.

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Athanasius. He obeyed both the mandates, and, after a short confinement, was set at liberty. I am not disposed to approve of all the steps taken by this council. I only maintain, that the principle of their proceedings was just and equitable. Every person who is a member of any society, religious or civil, would own, if a similar occasion presented itself, that he had a right to require the treacherous member who had laboured to subvert that society, either publicly to retract his sentiments, or to submit to a decree of expulsion.

But Abelard, in his own account of the transaction, largely descants on the iniquity and imperiousness of the Synod. The acrimonious invective, the airs of triumph on occasion of little advantages gained by himself in the course of the debate, the shrewdness of his cavils, and above all, the dexterous evasion of the main points on which the controversy rests, these things appear on the face of his narrative, and are so exactly similar to the conduct of modern heretics, much better known to the world, that I may well be spared the recital of them. Moreover, want of sincerity, as well as of temper, is so evident in the narrative of Abelard, that we can lay no decisive stress on his testimony in things with which his own character is concerned. Indeed the want of honesty and veracity appears to have been most striking features in this ingenious and learned disputant.

A commentary on the Epistle to the Romans was also published by Abelard, to which, in an introductory preface, he has prefixed an observation on the comparative value of the Gospels and the Epistles. "The former, he thinks, are designed to teach those things which every Christian ought to know; the latter to inculcate a strict attention and obedience to them. These last," says he, "contain some wholesome documents and advice, which, though they appertain not to the essence of belief,

may serve to embellish the Christian establishment, and to develop its tenets." This is the method of speaking usual with Socinians, namely, to undervalue the authority of some parts of Scripture, compared with others, as if holy men of God did not speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost with equal authority through the whole of the sacred volume. It is not necessary to give any other account of the commentary than that which the reader may conjecture for himself from the view already stated of the leading sentiments of the author. CENT. XII.

Bernard, paying a visit to the nunnery of the Paraclete, over which Eloisa presided, was heard from the pulpit by the abbess and her nuns with admiration. He read and approved of their laws and institutes, which had been drawn up by Abelard. He objected only to one phrase in their repetition of the Lord's Prayer. For the common expression DAILY, in the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," they had been taught to say supersubstantial bread. Abelard, it seems, had literally followed the etymology of the Greek word*; seduced, I suppose, by the Aristotelian chimeras, which relate to substance. The plain mind of Bernard, attending to sense and utility, rather than to sound and glitter, revolted against the innovation; and, while he spake with a respectful deference of the man, and commended every thing else relating to the nunnery, he expressed his disapprobation of the unusual term. When Abelard heard of it, his pride took fire; he wrote to Bernard a warm expostulation, and, by undertaking to show the superior authority of St. Matthew to St. Luke, he endeavoured to support the propriety of the term supersubstantial. Here again appeared the Socinian mode of undervaluing one part of Scripture, in com-

* Επιουσιον.

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parison of another. This is the first instance recorded of an open altercation between Bernard and Abelard. For I find, at least, no decisive proof of any opposition made, as yet, by the former, to the publications of the latter. On the contrary, Bernard was hitherto far from being clear in his own judgment concerning the real theological character of Abelard; and of his caution and charity we shall presently see abundant proofs. The little story which has been told is trifling in its own nature, if any thing can be called trifling which illustrates the human character, and displays the connexion between doctrine and disposition, which was never more apparently exhibited than in the transactions of Abelard.

The Council of Soissons was held, A. D. 1121.

The council of Soissons had been held in the year 1121. It was a long time after this that Bernard took any particular notice of Abelard. Either he had heard little of the controversy, or had not thought himself called on to deliver his sentiments. Abelard, however, notwithstanding his retractations, persevered in teaching his heresies; and it became, at length, impossible for his errors to escape the observation of the abbot of Clairval.

Abelard accused by the Abbot of St. Thierry, A. D. 1139.

About the year 1139*, William, abbot of St. Thierry, alarmed at the growing progress of Abelard's doctrine, wrote to Geofry, bishop of Chartres, and to Bernard, entreating them to undertake the defence of divine truth. "God knows I am confounded," said he, "when I, who am 'no man†,' am compelled to address, on a subject of urgent importance, you and others, whose duty it was to speak, though hitherto ye have been silent‡. For when I see the faith of our common hope grievously

* Bern. Opera. Vol. I. p. 303. † Psalm xxii.

‡ Hence it is evident that Bernard had not yet distinguished himself in this controversy, though it must have been of above eighteen years standing. A plain proof of his caution and modesty.

and dangerously corrupted, without resistance, and without contradiction; that faith, which Christ hath consecrated for us with his blood, for which Apostles and martyrs contended even to death, which holy teachers defended with much labour and fatigue, and transmitted entire and uncorrupt to these dregs of time, I feel a distress which constrains me to speak. I could wish, if it were necessary, even to lay down my life for it. They are no small objects which I lay before you: the faith of the Holy Trinity, the person of the Mediator, the Holy Spirit, the grace of God, the sacrament of our common redemption, are the subjects which engage my attention. For Peter Abelard again teaches and writes novelties: his books cross the seas, and pass over the Alps: and his new sentiments concerning the faith are carried into provinces and kingdoms, are preached to crowded audiences, and are openly defended; they are even said to have made their way into the court of Rome. I say to you both, your silence is dangerous, both to yourselves and to the Church of God—I tell you, this monster is as yet in labour; but if he be not prevented, he will produce a poisonous serpent, for which no charmer can be found. CENT. XII.

"I lately met with 'The Theology of Peter Abelard.' I confess this title made me curious to read. I have sent you the books with my remarks; whether there is a just cause for my apprehensions, judge ye. As new terms and new ideas disturbed my spirit, and I had no one before whom I could freely unbosom my thoughts, I have applied myself to you, and implore you to defend the cause of God and the whole Latin Church. The man fears you, and dreads your authority. For, indeed, almost all the champions of divine truth being deceased, a domestic enemy hath invaded the defenceless state of the Church, and hath betaken himself

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to a singular method of teaching; dealing with Scripture, as he used to do with logic, by introducing his own inventions and novelties: a censor, not a disciple of the faith, a corrector, not a follower."

He then mentions the heads of the heresy, which he had discovered, and which were much the same as those which have already been described, and he promises to enlarge in writing on the same argument, "with the help of Him, in whose hand are both we and our words." "Nor," says he, "do I value your being offended at my language, provided I please you in the doctrine. If I can convince you that I am justly moved, I trust you also will be moved, and, in an important cause like this, will not fear to part with him, though he be a foot, a hand, or even an eye. I myself have loved him, and wish to do so still, God is my witness: but in this cause I see neither relation nor friend."

Bernard read the book which William sent, and returned this answer: "I think your zeal both just and necessary: that it was not idle, the book, which you have sent me, demonstrates. In this book you effectually stop the mouths of gainsayers: not that I have given it that accurate survey, which you desire; but I own I am pleased with it, even from a cursory reading, and I think the arguments solid and convincing. But as I have not been accustomed to trust to my own judgment, especially in things of so great importance, I believe the best way would be for you and me to meet, and talk over the subject. Yet even this, I think, cannot be done till after Easter, lest the devotions of the holy season be distracted. But I must beseech you to have patience with me, and to pardon my silence on the subject, since I was hitherto ignorant of most if not all the particulars. As to that which you exhort me to, God is able to inspire me with his good spirit through your prayers."

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Bernard, having at length made himself master of the subject, and being impressed with its magnitude, resolved to exert himself on the occasion. He first held a private conference with Abelard, and admonished him, in a friendly manner, to correct his errors. But this first attempt being fruitless, he took two or three persons with him, according to the precept of the Gospel; and, in their presence, expostulated with the innovator *. Finding his endeavours to be unsuccessful, and observing, on accurate inquiry, how much the evil spread, it now became a question with Bernard, whether he ought to sacrifice the honour of God and the good of souls to the humour of an artful and obstinate heretic. As a conscientious spirit, like his, was obliged to decide this question in the negative, and as he had sufficiently exculpated himself from the charge of personal malice, or blind precipitation, he began to warn the disciples of Abelard against the errors of their master, and, as far as in him lay, to guard the Christian world against the growing heresy.

He wrote to pope Innocent in these terms. "Another foundation is laid, than that which has been laid for us. A new creed is coined in France: virtues and vices are discussed, not according to rules of morality: the Sacraments are treated unfaithfully; and the mystery of the Holy Trinity is investigated, not in simplicity and sobriety, but in a manner contrary to that which we have received. Our theologian, with Arius, disposes of the Trinity by degrees and measures: with Pelagius, prefers free-will to grace; with Nestorius, divides Christ, and excludes the man Christ Jesus from all connexion with the Trinity †."

To another bishop he wrote thus: "The dragon had been silent many days; but, when he was silent

* Bern. Opera. Vol. I. p. 310. † Id. p. 306.

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in Britain *, he conceived iniquity in France. The man boasts, that he hath infected the court of Rome with the poison of his novelty: that he hath dispersed his books among the Romans: and he assumes those as the patrons of his error, by whom he ought to be condemned. May God defend that Church for which he died, that he may present it to himself, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing †."

Let this suffice for a specimen of the glowing language of Bernard; too vehement, perhaps, but surely kindled by the fire of charity. Those, however, alone can judge of the spirit of the man with candour and equity, who feel the importance of divine truth. Humanly speaking, the errors of Abelard, aided by the propensities of our depraved nature, might in a silent and gradual manner have pervaded all Europe, and the propagation of Socinianism might have been matured six centuries ago, if the mischief had not been thus vigorously opposed.

Abelard challenges Bernard.

A. D. 1140.

In the archiepiscopal city of Sens, a superstitious ceremony, namely, the translation of a saint's body into the cathedral Church, was to be performed in the year 1140. Abelard, incensed at the open and repeated opposition of Bernard, challenged him to make good his charges of heresy at this solemn assembly. Undoubtedly he proceeded regularly in the formality of the challenge. For he implored the archbishop of Sens to cite his accuser before the assembly, and promised to meet him. The archbishop wrote to Bernard accordingly, and named the day on which he should expect to see him. Bernard seems to have been considerably embarrassed at this step. His good sense enabled him to see the difference between popular preaching, and close scholastical argumentation. He had been habituated to

* He alludes to the Pelagian heresy, which had flourished in Britain.

† Bern. Opera. Vol. I. p. 307.

the former: with the latter he was unacquainted: and, he knew that Abelard excelled all men in the arts of controversy, in which also age and experience would give him a great advantage over a young antagonist. Bernard, therefore, at first refused to appear. "I was but a youth," says he, in his own account of this matter, "and he a man of war from his youth *. Besides, I judged it improper to commit the measures of divine faith, which rested on the foundations of eternal truth, to the petty reasonings of the schools. I said, that his own writings were sufficient to accuse him, and that it was not my concern, but that of the bishops, to decide concerning his tenets." CENT. XII.

Elated at the apparent pusillanimity of Bernard, Abelard collected his friends, spake in a strong tone of victory, and appealed to many concerning the justice of his cause. "What things he wrote of me to his scholars," says Bernard, "I love not to relate. He took care to spread the news every where, that he would answer me at Sens on the day appointed. I yielded, however, though with tears and much reluctance, to the advice of my friends. They saw that all men were going, as it were, to the spectacle, to behold the combatants. What would they say, if one of them did not appear? The people would stumble, the adversary would triumph, and error would grow stronger, if none should appear to answer and to confute. Moved by these reasons, I determined at length to meet Abelard at the time and place, with no other preparation than that Scripture-promise, do not premeditate, how you may answer; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall say; and that other, the Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me †."

The assembly was splendid. Lewis VII. was

* Id. p. 183. † Id.

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there with his nobles; the archbishop with the bishops of his diocese, many abbots, professors, and in general all the learned of France were present.

The superstitious ceremony being performed on the first day, on the second the two abbots appeared, and every eye was fixed on them. The whole assembly was suspended in expectation of the contest. Bernard arose, and in a modest and diffident manner declared; "I accuse not this man; let his own works speak against him. Here they are, and these are the propositions extracted from them. Let him say, I wrote them not, or let him condemn them, if they be erroneous, or let him defend them against my objections." He then delivered the charges to the promoter, who began distinctly to read them. He had not read far, when Abelard arose. "I appeal," said he, "to the pope," and refusing to hear any more, began to leave the assembly. The assembly was astonished at the unexpected step. "Do you fear," said Bernard, "for your person? you are perfectly secure; you know that nothing is intended against you: you may answer freely, assured of a patient hearing*." "I have appealed to the court of Rome," cried the appalled heretic, and withdrew.

Bernard, in writing the account of these transactions to the pope, gives it as his opinion, that the procedure of Abelard was unjustifiable, to appeal from judges, of whom he had himself made choice†.

If the issue of the conference between these two renowned antagonists had been such as to disappoint the reader's expectations, something, however, divinely instructive, may be learned from the narrative. I know nothing in Bernard's history more decisively descriptive of his character, than his conduct in this whole transaction. By nature, sanguine and vehe-

* Vita Bern. V. II. p. 1138. † Id. 183.

ment; by grace and self-knowledge, modest and diffident; he seems, on this occasion, to have united boldness with timidity, and caution with fortitude. It was evidently in the spirit of the purest faith in God, as well as in the most charitable zeal for divine truth, that he came to the contest; while Abelard, who, presumptuous through a long course of scholastic honours, came elated and self-confident, drooped in the very crisis which called for his eloquence and resources. His courage seems to have failed him; or, perhaps the consciousness of real heresy made him incapable of standing before a distinct and orderly examination. At any rate, the humble was exalted, and the proud was disgraced, according to the maxims of the Gospel; and the conduct of the men was a precise counterpart of the doctrines which they severally espoused.

The bishops of France wrote to the pope an account of the procedure; and, in their words, I shall recite the little that remains to be mentioned of the acts of the assembly.

Having given an account of the conduct of Bernard, perfectly agreeable to that which we have heard from the abbot himself, they observe, that "he certainly appeared at Sens, inflamed with pious fervour, nay, unquestionably with the fire of the Holy Spirit*." And they proceed as follows:

"As Abelard's sentiments were read over and over in public audience, and as the arguments of Bernard, partly built on the most solid reasons, partly on the authorities of Augustine and other holy fathers, convinced the synod, that the tenets, which he opposed, were not only false but also heretical, we, sparing the man out of deference to the apostolic See, condemned the opinions. We entreat you to confirm our decrees, and to impose silence on the author of the

* Vita Bern. V. II. p. 3111.

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books, in order to prevent the pernicious consequences with which his errors may be attended."

In what manner Bernard disproved the tenets of Abelard before the council, may be judged from the following brief review of his long epistle to the pope*.

"The new theologist of France is one, who scorns to be ignorant of any thing in heaven above, or in earth beneath; to one point only, himself and his own ignorance, he is perfectly blind. While he is prepared to give a reason for every thing, he presumes things above reason, and contrary both to reason and to faith. We ought to consider that Mary is commended, because she prevented reasoning by faith†, and that Zachariah was punished, because he tempted a faithful God by reasonings. Abraham also is extolled, who believed in hope against hope.

"But our theologist says, 'What does it profit, if, what we teach, cannot be rendered intelligible?' Thus promising, perfectly to explain mysterious things, he places degrees in the Trinity, measures in the divine Majesty, and numbers in eternity. In the very entrance on his work, he defines faith to be 'an estimation or an opinion.' But Christian faith has no such limits. Let estimation and opinion belong to the academies, whose character it is to doubt of all things; to know nothing. I shall follow the sentiments of the Apostle of the Gentiles, and know that I shall not be confounded. His definition of faith, I own, is agreeable to me: Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen. Substance of things hoped for; not a fancy of empty conjectures. The idea of substance is connected with something certain and fixed. Faith is not opinion, but certainty.

* Bern. Vol. I. p. 650. † Luke i. 38.

I shall not dwell upon a number of nugatory speculations, in which, while he labours to make Plato a Christian, he makes himself a pagan. I come to more weighty matters. I have read in a certain book of his sentences, and in his exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, that he holds an original sentiment concerning the mystery of our redemption: namely, that the ancient doctors were unanimous in their mode of interpretation concerning the subject, that they all held in such a manner; but, that he holds in a different manner. And art thou he, who constructest for us a new Gospel? Thou hast discovered, it seems, that the Son of God did not assume flesh, that he might free man from the devil. Let them give thanks, says the Psalmist, whom the Lord hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy*. This thou wouldst not deny, if thou wert not under the power of the enemy. Thou canst not give thanks with the redeemed, who art not thyself redeemed. That man seeks not for redemption, who knows not himself to be a captive. But those, who do know, cry to the Lord; and the Lord hears them, and redeems them from the hand of the enemy. Hear an Apostle: "If God, peradventure, may give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will†." Hearest thou these words, AT HIS WILL, and dost thou deny the power of the devil?—Hear the Lord himself. He is called by him, the prince of this world‡, and the STRONG MAN ARMED, AND THE POSSESSOR OF GOODS§; and dost thou say, that he has no power over men?—This power of Satan was known to the Apostle, when he said, "who delivered us from the powers of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of

* Ps. cvi. 6. † 2 Tim. ii. 25.

‡ John xiv. 30. § Luke xi, 21.

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his dear Son*."—Let him learn, therefore, that the devil has not only power, but a just power over men. Though the devil himself, who invaded us, is not just; but God who exposed us to him, is just.

"Man was then justly enslaved, but mercifully delivered: with such mercy, however, that justice appeared even in his deliverance. For what could man do of himself, to recover lost righteousness, being now a bond-slave of the devil? Another's righteousness is therefore assigned to him after he had lost his own. The prince of this world came, and found nothing in Christ†; and, when he still would lay violent hands on the innocent, most justly he lost the captives, whom he possessed; and that Being upon whom death had no just claim, having unjustly suffered the pains of death, by this voluntary submission justly freed from the debt of death, and from the dominion of the devil, him who was legally obnoxious to both. Man was the debtor: man also paid the debt. For, if one died for all, then were all dead‡, that the satisfaction of one might be imputed to all, as he alone bore the sins of all; and now he, who offended, and he who satisfied divine justice, are found the same; because the head and the body is one Christ. The head then satisfied for the members, Christ for his own bowels, since, according to St. Paul's Gospel, which fully confutes the error of Abelard, God hath quickened us together with him, who died for us, having forgiven us all trespasses, blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances, nailing it to his cross, and spoiling principalities and powers§. May I be found among those spoils of which adverse powers are deprived! If I be told, your fathers enslaved you, I answer, my brother hath redeemed me. Why may not I have another's righteousness imputed, since I have another's

* Coloss. i. 13. † John xiv. 30.
‡ 2 Cor. v. 15. § Coloss. ii. 15.

sin imputed to me? Is there sin in the seed of the sinner, and not righteousness in the blood of Christ? —As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. The fault has truly laid hold of me, but grace has also visited me. If the judgment was by one to condemnation, the free-gift was of many offences to justification*. Nor do I fear, being thus freed from the powers of darkness, to be rejected by the Father of lights, since I am justified freely by the blood of his Son. He who pitied the sinner, will not condemn the just. I call myself just, but it is through His righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness †, and he is made of God for us righteousness ‡. Thus is man made righteous by the blood of the Redeemer; though Abelard, this man of perdition, thinks the only use of his coming was, to deliver to us good rules of life, and to give us an example of patience and charity. Is this then the whole of the great mystery of godliness, this which any uncircumcised and unclean person may easily penetrate? What is there in this beyond the common light of nature? But it is not so: for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God §: Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent ‖; and, if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost ¶.— He asks, had the devil dominion over Abraham and the other elect? No; but he would have had, if they had not been freed by faith in him that was to come. As it is written, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness; and Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it, and was glad. It was the blood of Christ, which like dew distilled on Lazarus, and preserved him from the flames of hell through faith in him who was to suffer. We must believe of all the elect of that time, that they were

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* Rom. v. 16. † Rom. x. 4. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 30.
§ 2 Cor. ii. 14. ‖ Mat. xi. 25. ¶ 2 Cor. iv. 3.

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born as we are, under the powers of darkness, but were thence delivered before they died; and that only by the blood of Christ.

Abelard asks, why so tedious and painful a mode of deliverance, since Christ could have effected it by a mere volition? Who affirms that the Almighty was limited to this mode? But the efficacy of this method, which he preferred to all other possible ones, is surely demonstrable from that very preference: and, perhaps, in this its excellence may appear, that the grievous sufferings of our Redeemer afford us an admonition of the strongest and most impressive nature, concerning our own fallen and miserable condition. But no man knows, nor can know to the full, what precious benefits, what wisdom, what propriety, what glory the unsearchable depth of this mystery contains in itself.—But, though we may not search out the mystery of the divine will, we may feel the effect of its execution, and reap the fruit of its goodness: and what we may know, we ought not to conceal.—When we were yet sinners, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Where reconciliation is, there is remission of sins. In what then lies remission of sins? *This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you, for the remission of sins**.—Why my blood, say you, what he might have done by a bare word? Ask God himself.—I may know that it is so: why it is so, I may not. Shall the potter say to him that formed him, why hast thou made me thus?

"Strange, says he, that God should be reconciled to men by the death of his Son, which ought to have incensed him the more against them. As if in one and the same transaction the iniquity of wicked men might not displease, and the piety of the sufferer please God. What, says he, can expiate the

* Luke xxii. 20.

guilt of the murder of Christ, if nothing less than that murder could expiate the sin of Adam? We answer briefly, that very blood which they shed, and the intercession of him, whom they slew.—Not simply the death but the voluntary obedience unto death, of the Redeemer, was well pleasing to God; of the Redeemer I say, who by that death destroyed death, wrought salvation, retrieved innocence, triumphed over principalities and powers, reconciled all things in heaven and in earth, and restored all things. And because this precious death, which was to be spontaneously undergone, could not take place but through the sin of men, he, not delighted indeed with their wickedness, but taking occasion from it to execute the purposes of his own benevolence, by death condemned death. This blood was able to expiate the guilt which shed it, and therefore left no doubt of its expiating the first original sin. In answer to his tragical complaints of the cruelty of this dispensation, we say, God did not thirst for blood, but for salvation, which was to be effected by blood. Salvation we say, and not, as he writes, the mere display of love, and the exhibition of useful instruction and a powerful example. For what avails instruction without recovery? How useless the finest lessons, unless the body of sin be destroyed in us! At this rate the whole harm of Adam's sin lies in the exhibition of an evil example, since the medicine must be adapted to the quality of the wound. For, if we be Christians and not Pelagians, we must confess the sin of Adam to be derived to us, and by sin death; and that righteousness is restored to us by Christ, not by instruction, but by regeneration; and by righteousness life; that, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, righteousness came upon all men to justification of life *. If, as he says, the design of the incarnation

* Rom. v. 18.

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was illumination, and a powerful incentive to love, we may own these things came from Christ; but, from whom came redemption and deliverance?

"As far as in him lies, he, who attributes the glory of redemption not to the cross of Christ, but to our proficiency in holy conversation, renders void and of none effect the mystery of the divine dispensation. But God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom is our salvation, life, and resurrection.

"I see, indeed, three capital objects in this work of our salvation, the form of humility by which the Son of God made himself of no reputation, the measure of love, which he extended even to the death of the Cross, and the mystery of redemption, in which he suffered death. The two former, exclusive of the latter, are as if you painted on a vacuum. Great and necessary indeed was the example of humility; great, and worthy of all acceptation, was the example of his charity; but remove redemption, and these have no ground to stand upon. I would follow the humble Jesus, I desire to embrace with the arms of love him who loved me, and gave himself for me; but—I must EAT the Paschal Lamb. Unless I eat his flesh and drink his blood, I have no life in me. It is one thing to follow Jesus, another to embrace, another to feed upon him. To follow, is wholesome counsel; to embrace, is solemn joy; to feed upon him, is a happy life. For his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. The bread of God is he that cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world *. What room is there for counsel or for joy, without life? they are mere pictures and shadows, without a solid ground and substance. Therefore, neither examples of humility, nor displays of charity, are any thing without redemption."

If the reader has attentively considered the argu-

* John vi.

ments of Abelard, and the answer of Bernard, he has seen what weight ought to be laid on a fashionable sentiment of this day, namely, that in consequence of the improvements in reasoning and philosophy, a person is now capable of expounding the Scriptures much better than the ancients could do. If the observation be supposed to be applicable to the essential doctrines of salvation, I ask, How does this appear to be the case? In subjects of human art and science, indeed, new discoveries may be expected, but with what pertinency can the remark be applied to divinity? The whole system of divine truth is not more perfectly revealed now than it was seventeen hundred years ago. The Scriptures are the same; common sense is the same; the influence of the Holy Spirit is the same; and human wants are the same: and if men search and pray in humility and seriousness; if they cry after knowledge, and lift up their voice for understanding; if they seek her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures, what is there to hinder them from understanding the fear of the Lord, and finding the knowledge of God, in one age as well as in another*? Is not God said to be willing to show, in the ages to come, the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus†? And will any man say, that, in some particular periods, he is not willing to unfold these inestimable riches? It is not to be denied, but that by skill in learned languages, by study, and by general cultivation of the human mind, much light may be thrown on several doubtful passages of holy writ: their connexion and meaning may be rendered clearer, and so far improvements may be made in the interpretation of Scripture; but when this is admitted, we must still maintain that no new discoveries are to be expected in regard to the essential and funda-

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* Prov. ii. † Eph. ii. 7.

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mental truths of divine wisdom and holiness, and to these truths this whole remark is exclusively confined. These, wherever the Bible can be had in an intelligible language, seem to lie open to the view of all humble and serious inquirers in every age. What can modern Socinianism say more than Abelard said? And does not Bernard answer it in the same manner as evangelical divines do now? Even in the darkness of the twelfth century we have seen the light as clear and full in the main, as it can be at this day. Old errors may be revived and dressed up anew, but they are the same errors still. Even the praise of original genius will be denied to the modern heretic, by him, who carefully investigates antiquity. The whole circle of human sciences, however they be cultivated and improved in our days, can add nothing to the stock of spiritual understanding. In every age God has not been wanting to his Church; and divine truth has ever appeared the same, and has brought forth the same holy fruits in those, who fear God, and believe the Gospel of his Son.

I shall not now need to give an abstract of the other letters, which Bernard wrote on this occasion. In them all he sees the true ground of Abelard's errors. While this heretic undertook to comprehend all that God is, by mere human reason, while nothing seemed to escape his penetration either in heaven above or in the depth beneath, he was totally ignorant of himself*. He was ignorant of nothing, but of himself†. Such is the language of Bernard, concerning him, while he cautions the pope and other dignitaries of the Roman Church against the seductions of heresy, and informs them how much Abelard presumed on the expectation of finding patrons at Rome, where his books had been dispersed‡.

* Vol. I. p. 184, 185. † 186. ‡ 312.

The influence of Bernard's labours in this cause on the minds of the Christian world was very great, and decisively defeated the designs of the enemy. Gaufredus, one of the writers of Bernard's life, observes, "Blessed be God, who gave to us a better master, by whom he confuted the ignorance of the former, and quashed his arrogance, by whom Christ exhibited to us three special objects in his sufferings, —an example of virtue, an incentive of love, and a sacrifice of redemption*."

Abelard condemned by a definitive sentence of the pope.

Roused by the exhortations of Bernard, the pope pronounced a definitive sentence against Abelard, ordered his works to be burned, and the heretic to be confined in some monastery, at the discretion of the leaders of the council which had condemned his doctrine. We have, however, better authority than that of the pope for pronouncing his sentiments heretical. And though the decisions of the pope deserve no attention from Christians, it was matter of sincere pleasure to all, who loved the souls of men, that Abelard was stripped of the power of doing mischief. As for the rest, he was treated with as great lenity as the nature of ecclesiastical government at that time, which was certainly absurd and arbitrary in many respects, would admit. He was permitted to end his days in the monastery of Cluni, over which Peter the venerable presided, who treated him with much compassion and friendship. An interview was also promoted by the good-natured offices of Peter, and of another abbot, between the two champions, the particulars of which are not known. Only it appears, that Bernard declared himself satisfied with Abelard's orthodoxy. I suppose the latter would, in conversation, retract, or soften, or explain his thoughts in the same manner as he did in an apology, which he published at this time. But the

* Vol. II. 1074.

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reader remembers, that this was not the first time of his submitting himself to the judgment of the Church. Whether he was sincere or not, it belongs not to man to determine. The charity of Bernard, however, is incontestable, because he dropped the accusation, as soon as Abelard had ceased to vent heretical sentiments. Not personal malice, but Christian zeal seems to have influenced the abbot of Clairval in this whole transaction.

If it be asked, what benefit resulted from the scene, which we have reviewed? it is answered, either Abelard's retractation was sincere or not. If the former, the advantage was great to the heretic himself; if the latter, he doubtless added hypocrisy to his other crimes, though he was prevented from making himself accessary to the ruin of others. But the guilt of hypocrisy was properly and solely his own. If his opponents contracted any guilt on the account, it would be unlawful to oppose error at all, for fear of possible consequences. To this I add, that the benefit resulting to the whole Church for ages, is unquestionably evident; a consideration worthy the attention of those, who, in their charity for single heretics, seem to forget the mercy and charity due to the souls of thousands. Abelard, however, continued after these events in quiet obscurity, till his death, which took place in the year 1142, or 1143.

Death of Abelard, A. D. 1142, or 1143.

Eloisa survived this extraordinary man many years. Their correspondence still remains, and I have examined it with a view to discover, whether there be any evidences of genuine conversion in the unhappy couple. That they were sorry for their past follies is certain; that the latter part of their lives was outwardly decent and regular is no less evident; but of real repentance, genuine faith in Christ, and the true love of God, I cannot discern any satisfactory proofs.

I have now enabled the reader, by an orderly statement of facts, to decide for himself what candour and justice there is in the declaration of a learned historian, that "Bernard misunderstood some of the opinions of Abelard, and wilfully perverted others. For," continues he, "the zeal of this good abbot too rarely permitted him to consult, in his decisions, the dictates of impartial equity; and hence it was, that he almost always applauded beyond measure, and censured without mercy*." Wilful perversions, and by a good man too! what inconsistency of language! Or is Bernard called a good man ironically? Or did this writer feel a sympathy with one of these great men, and an antipathy to the other? Certainly, whoever, like Bernard, defends the real truth as it is in Jesus, with the simplicity of a Christian, even though he preserve modesty, caution, and charity, must expect no mercy from the criticisms of men more zealous for the honour of what they improperly call rational religion, than for that of Jesus Christ. The world will LOVE ITS OWN: "the carnal mind is enmity against God;" and he, who in charity supports evangelical truth, and, under God, is made wise to win souls to real humility and holiness, should commit himself to him that judgeth righteously, and patiently wait his decision.

Criticism of Mosheim.

If Mosheim do not altogether deserve the censure implied in these observations, undoubtedly he is not to be acquitted of uncharitableness, temerity, and self-sufficiency.

* Mosheim, p. 601. Vol. I. Quarto.

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CONTROVERSIES OF BERNARD WITH SEVERAL OTHER REAL OR SUPPOSED HERETICS. SOME ACCOUNT OF THE CATHARI.

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Gillebert de la Porree, bishop of Poitiers, possessed of a subtile genius, and indulging a taste like that of Abelard, undertook to explain the mystery of the Trinity, by some curious distinctions and refinements. Offence was, however, given by his publications, and the zeal and eloquence of Bernard were employed in confuting him by public disputation. I shall not attempt to explain this controversy. It seems to have originated from the metaphysical spirit of Gillebert, whose chief fault appears to have been, that he was not content with plain truth, and with stopping there in his inquiries, where the Scripture does. The Trinity in unity, received in the simplicity of Scripture, is one of the clearest, as well as one of the most decisively scriptural doctrines in the world; and so it has always

appeared to those who believe what is revealed, and who are content to be ignorant of the MANNER how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three in one. But, though there seems no positive evidence of the heresy of Gillebert, the council of Rheims condemned some of his propositions, which were of a dangerous nature. Gillebert recanted them: Bernard candidly expressed his belief of the sincerity of the recantation; and the bishop of Poitiers was allowed to return to his bishopric *.

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I have examined the sentiments of Gillebert, and cannot, I own, form any determinate conception of their nature. He wandered in the misty region of abstruse metaphysics, and seems both to have lost himself, and to have been unintelligible to his readers. Bernard endeavoured to stop the mystic inquirer in his career; and this was no unprofitable employment; but again Mosheim is displeased with the conduct of the abbot, and seems to intimate, that he himself understood the opinions of Gillebert, and that Bernard did not, when he says, "these refined notions were far above the comprehension of good St. Bernard, who was by no means accustomed to such profound disquisitions, to such intricate researches †." Does Mosheim really mean what he says, or is the epithet good, synonymous with weak and ignorant? Bernard was, however, with the critic's leave, a man of sound understanding and of true wisdom; and if it were worth while, I could easily furnish the reader with such specimens of Gillebert's subtilities, as would fully justify the account given of him at the beginning of this chapter.

* Bern. Vol. II. p. 1138.—Du Pin's 12th Cent. Chap. VIII.

† Quarto, Vol. II. p. 602. As Mosheim's work, translated by Maclaine, is far better known than the original in England, I always quote the former, and would be understood, both here and elsewhere, to refer to that rather than to the latter.

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If to oppose the popedom with vigour and fortitude be in itself a certain criterion of a real Christian, Arnold of Brescia may justly be ranked among the most eminent saints. But the spirit and views of an innovator should be known, that we may determine, whether he deserve the character of a reformer. In Arnold, the spirit of an old Roman republican was united with the theological sentiments of a Socinian. He was the disciple of Abelard, and was in action as daring as that heretic had been in speculation. Bernard vehemently opposed his designs; and while he allowed his morals to be decent and regular, he guarded the Christian world against his ambition and secular artifices. The conduct of Arnold demonstrated, that Bernard penetrated into his real character. For this disciple of Abelard, having gained over at Rome a large party to his views, by his address and dexterity stirred up a sedition against the pontiff; during the violence of which, private houses were burned; the property of the clergy and nobles was plundered; the pope was driven from Rome; and, in general, the civil government was disordered and convulsed. Flushed with success, Arnold planned a scheme for the restoration of the forms of the old republic: but Providence favoured not his designs. In the end he was seized and burned, and his ashes were thrown into the Tiber. His case demonstrates, that to oppose what is established, however great be the abuses or faults of an establishment, is an uncertain criterion of character. What is it, which men really mean to substitute in the room of that government which is established? This is a question to which every man, who fears God, should seriously attend, before he suffer himself, by countenancing innovations, to introduce anarchy and confusion. Here Arnold of Brescia failed entirely *.

* Bern. p. 187, &c. Vol. I. Berington's Abelard, p. 301, &c.

Tanchelin in Flanders, and Peter de Bruys, with his disciple Henry, in France, were also famous innovators in this century. The first appears to have been altogether so worthless and extravagant a person, that I shall not detain the reader a moment concerning his character or his actions. Nor can I give such an account of the others as is very satisfactory to my own mind. They were both treated as heretics: they both made many converts to their sentiments; and were condemned by the then reigning powers. Peter was burnt to ashes, and Henry was put under a confinement, in which he seems to have ended his days. Peter of Cluni, from whose writings we have the most copious account of de Bruys, and doubtless a man of a mild and moderate temper, charges him with atrocious excesses, and represents him as supporting his tenets by violence and sedition *. The testimony against the moral character of Henry is still more peremptory. For Bernard charges him with scandalous impurities of practice, and refers to such proofs and circumstances, as might have led to a detection of the charges, if he had indeed been innocent. And it was very much by the authority of Bernard, that the credit and party of Henry were sunk in the Christian world †. CENT. XII.

These men, however, bore a striking testimony against the predominant corruptions of the Church. The superstitious rites with which the primitive custom of infant-baptism was now disgraced, naturally gave a strong plausibility to their arguments in favour of adult-baptism exclusively. They protested also against the extravagant sumptuousness of churches, the adoration of relics and images, and against masses, prayers for the dead, and transubstantiation. It is not worth while to discriminate

* Du Pin's Heretics, 12th Cent. Berington's Abelard.

† Vol. I. p. 238. Vol. II. 1139.

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with minute accuracy, what were the tenets of Peter, and what were those of Henry. With no great difference from one another, they descanted on the topics just mentioned; they loudly inveighed against the papal and clerical abominations, under which Europe groaned at that time, and provoked a storm of vengeance, which proved their ruin. If we may judge from the accounts of their lives,—and they are very scanty and confused,—these men seem to have been rather bad citizens than heretics. The darkest circumstance relating to their character is, that they seem not to have been so clear and explicit in describing what they approved, as what they condemned. Satire and invective are plants of rapid and easy growth in the malignant soil of human nature. Men of the greatest licentiousness, both in sentiments and practice, can discover and display, with sufficient ability, the evils of popery. It belongs only to souls truly humbled, and well-informed in scriptural principles, to erect in its room the edifice of real evangelical truth and holiness; and I wish I could show the reader that Peter and Henry performed this in any degree.

But though, among the supposed heretics of this century, we have failed in attempting to discover any particular leaders, who carry the unquestionable marks of real Christians, yet that there must have been some who were really such, is evident, from the consideration, that there certainly were opposers of the Church of Rome at this time, who deserve the name of PROTESTANTS*. The writer, to whom I have already been indebted for some evidence of this nature, particularly in the account of Claudius of Turin, has, with singular learning and industry, illustrated this part of ecclesiastical history, and seems to have consulted the very best monuments and records. It would be tedious to

* Allix on the antient Churches of Piedmont, p. 139—183.

follow him through the mazes of a scene beyond expression obscure and perplexed. Nor can I depend on the attempts which he has made to class and distinguish his Protestant sects. The accusation of Manicheism was commonly brought against them all; nor will I venture to say, that every Christian sentiment or practice which he describes belongs to any one particular body of people. Those, who have conversed with different denominations of Christian professors, know how difficult it is to explain the various ramifications of parties, which, nevertheless, all seem to spring from one root; they are aware, also, how frequently it happens, that those, who are only superficially acquainted with the sectaries, and have noticed some external agreement, will hastily suppose persons to belong to the same class, when, in reality, they are quite opposite in spirit; and lastly, they have observed, that a disagreement in externals by no means, in all cases, implies an opposition of sentiments. Christian professors may differ in these smaller matters, and may even suspect the soundness of one another's principles, merely for want of mutual intercourse, when, in substance and in all essentials, they are the same people. Elaborate attempts to explain the several peculiarities and discriminations, for want of proper evidence, have often darkened this subject, instead of elucidating it. The worst consequence of such attempts is, that by the mixture of good and evil, which runs through such accounts, where the leading vestiges of Christianity are all along kept out of view, the reader can scarcely discern any true Church of Christ to have existed at all. How shall we conduct ourselves through this labyrinth? by laying down from the best authorities, the real marks of godliness, which existed among the various sects of professing Christians. If this can be done, the reader will find that the presence of God has been among them,

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however difficult it be to define the limits of the Church of Christ by human artificial distinctions. This I shall attempt to do in the case before us, omitting those things which are foreign to the design of this history.

A report of certain heretics by Evervinus, A. D. 1140.

Evervinus of Steinfeld, in the diocese of Cologne, wrote to Bernard, a little before the year 1140, a letter, preserved by Mabillon, concerning certain heretics in his neighbourhood *. He was perplexed in his mind concerning them, and wrote for a resolution of his doubts to the renowned abbot, whose word was law at that time in Christendom. Some extracts of this letter are as follows: "There have been lately some heretics discovered among us near Cologne, though several of them have, with satisfaction, returned again to the Church. One of their bishops and his companions openly opposed us in the assembly of the clergy and laity, in the presence of the archbishop of Cologne, and of many of the nobility, defending their heresies by the words of Christ and the Apostles. Finding that they made no impression, they desired that a day might be appointed for them, on which they might bring their teachers to a conference, promising to return to the Church, provided they found their masters unable to answer the arguments of their opponents, but that otherwise they would rather die, than depart from their judgment. Upon this declaration, having been admonished to repent for three days, they were seized by the people in the excess of zeal, and burnt to death; and what is very amazing, they came to the stake, and bare the pain, not only with patience, but even with joy. Were I with you, Father, I should be glad to ask you, how these members of Satan could persist in their heresy with such courage and constancy, as is scarcely to be found in the most religious believers of Christianity?"

* Allix, Churches of Piedmont, p. 140.

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It cannot be denied, that the reigning corruptions both of faith and practice, from the times of Gregory the second and third, distinguished by real idolatry, had rendered the pretence of uniformity, considered as a mark of the Church, entirely unsound. In these circumstances, then, the appeal to a fair and open course of Scriptural argument, was not unreasonable: the refusal of this appeal, and the requisition of an unqualified submission made to the supposed heretics, was unchristian: and, if neither in the general course of their lives, nor in their behaviour on this occasion, there was any thing arrogant, deceitful, or turbulent;—and Evervinus charges them with nothing of the kind;—the patience and joy of their martyrdom may seem to have arisen from the consideration, that God was with them. But Evervinus goes on: "their heresy is this: they say, that the Church is only among themselves, because they alone of all men follow the steps of Christ, and imitate the Apostles, not seeking secular gains, possessing no property, following the pattern of Christ, who was himself perfectly poor, and did not allow his disciples to possess any thing." Doubtless they carried this point too far *: for, rich Christians are charged to be rich in good works, willing to distribute, apt to communicate †: these are precepts, which suppose that the possession of opulent property is not incompatible with the character of a true Christian. The error is, perhaps, natural enough to those real good men, whose habits and prejudices are chiefly of the vulgar sort; and I would hence infer, that these supposed heretics were mostly of the lower class of people. God seems to have had a people among them, who detested the Romish abominations, and who served him in the Gospel of his Son. They

* It is probable, however, that Evervinus misrepresented them, as will appear afterwards.

† 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.

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appear, however, to have had no learned persons among them capable of doing justice to their characters. We must take these from the accounts of enemies. Evervinus proceeds: "Ye, say they to us, join house to house, and field to field, seeking the things of this world; so that even those, who are looked on as most perfect among you, namely, those of the monastic orders, though they have no private property, but have a community of possessions, do yet possess these things. Their own condition in the world they represent in such terms as these; we the poor of Christ, who have no certain abode, fleeing from one city to another, like sheep in the midst of wolves, do endure persecution with the Apostles and Martyrs; though our lives are strict, abstemious, laborious, devout, and holy, and though we seek only what is necessary for the support of the body, and live as men who are not of the world. But ye, lovers of the world, have peace with the world, because ye are of it. False apostles, who adulterate the word of Christ, seeking their own *, have misled you and your ancestors; whereas, we and our fathers, being born and bred up in the apostolical religion, have continued in the grace of Christ, and shall continue so to the end of the world. By their fruits ye shall know them, saith Christ; and our fruits are the footsteps of Christ. The Apostolical dignity, say they, is corrupted, by engaging itself in secular affairs, while it sits in the chair of Peter.—They do not believe infant-baptism to be a duty, alleging that passage of the Gospel, whosoever shall believe and be baptized, shall be saved †.

* Philipp. ii. 21.

† The propriety of infant-baptism has been once for all vindicated, p. 430, Vol. I. of this history. I shall only add here, that these sectaries are charged with Manicheism, and of course with the total rejection of water-baptism. It was no unusual thing to stigmatize new sects with the odious name of Manichees, though I know no evidence that there were any real remains of that antient sect in the twelfth century.

—They put no confidence in the intercession of Saints; and all things observed in the Church, which have not been established by Christ himself or his Apostles, they call superstitions. They do not admit of any purgatory after death; but affirm, that as soon as the souls depart out of the bodies, they enter into rest or punishment, proving their assertion from that passage of Solomon, which way soever the tree falls, whether to the south or to the north, there it lies; whence they make void all the prayers and oblations of believers for the deceased. —Those of them who have returned to our Church, told us, that great numbers of their persuasion were scattered almost every where, and that among them were many of our clergy and monks." CENT. XII.

All this seems to be at least as fair an account of true Christians, as might be expected from the mouths of enemies. Evervinus can be considered in no other light than that of an enemy, for he calls these men by the harsh name of monsters;—and it deserves to be noticed, that, from his confession it plainly appears, there were societies of Christians, in the twelfth century, who disowned the pope and all the fashionable superstitions. These societies were poor and illiterate indeed, hardly distinguishable from a number of fantastic and seditious sects, headed by the very exceptionable characters we have reviewed; and they were not denominated from any one leader of eminence. They do not seem to have understood the necessity of the existence of property, and therefore, with vulgar ignorance, they held, as it was reported, a tenet inconsistent with the good order of society*; yet, with all these defects, they probably possessed the spirit of real godliness; and though imperfect in light, and in some points of

* We shall afterwards see abundant occasion to doubt the truth even of this charge.

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practice, upheld the real truth of God, during the general profligacy and corruption.

If Bernard had been habitually conversant among them, I can conceive that much good might have arisen to both parties. From him they might have learned a more copious and perspicuous view of the doctrines of divine grace, and improved in the knowledge of the fundamental truths of the Scripture. His pious zeal and charity and humility might have instructed their minds, and disposed them to give up their absurd ideas concerning property and social rights: and he, from an intercourse with them, might have learned that the pope was indeed the Antichrist of Scripture, and so have been emancipated from a variety of superstitions, in which he was involved all his days. But mutual ignorance and prejudice prevented both him and them from even intimately knowing each other. In his 65th and 66th sermons on the Canticles*, he attacks these sectaries; he condemns their scrupulous refusal to† swear at all, which, according to him, was also one of their peculiarities. He upbraids them with the observance of secrecy in their religious rites, not considering the necessity which persecution laid upon them. He finds fault with a practice among them, of dwelling with women in the same house, without being married to them; though it must be owned, he expresses himself as one who knew very little of the manners of the sect. From the strength of prejudice, and from the numberless rumours propagated against them, he suspects them of hypocrisy; yet his testimony in favour of their general conduct seems to overbalance all his invectives. "If," says he, "you ask them of their faith, nothing can be more Christian: if you observe their

* P. 1493, Vol. I.

† The truth of this charge also, as will appear afterwards, is much to be doubted.

conversation, nothing can be more blameless; and what they speak they prove by deeds. You may see a man, for the testimony of his faith, frequent the Church, honour the elders, offer his gift, make his confession, receive the sacrament. What more like a Christian? As to life and manners, he circumvents no man, overreaches no man, and does violence to no man. He fasts much, he eats not the bread of idleness, he works with his hands for his support. —The whole body, indeed, are rustic, and illiterate; and all whom I have known of this sect are very ignorant." CENT. XII.

He who confesses a set of men to have been so apparently sound and upright in faith and practice, should not have treated them with contempt, because they were poor and vulgar. Their ignorance and rustic habits should rather serve as some apology for their errors concerning the nature of baptism and of human society. And the proofs of their hypocrisy ought to be very strong indeed, which can overturn such evidences of piety and integrity as Bernard himself has admitted concerning them. It seems also from his account, that they were not Separatists, in the modern sense of the word. Though no doubt they had private religious assemblies, they attended the worship of the general Church, and joined with other Christians in every thing which they deemed to be laudable. It would be tedious to examine minutely the charges and arguments of Bernard. He attacks some Manichean errors with great justice, supposing the men, against whom he writes, to be Manichees. He argues in defence of infant-baptism, and,—lamentable blindness in so holy a person!—he vindicates the doctrine of purgatory, and other Roman superstitions. He owns, that these men died with courage in defence of their doctrine, and blames those who, in an illegal and irregular manner, had destroyed some of them. Some notions, concerning marriage, which they were

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supposed to hold, he justly rebukes, though, from the excessive prejudice of their adversaries, it is very difficult to know how to affix charges of real guilt upon them.

Let not the lover of real Christianity be distressed at these things. The power of prejudice is great; and it is hard to say how many wrong notions both Bernard and these supposed heretics might maintain, through the circumstances of the times, and yet both serve the same God in the Gospel of his Son. That HE did so is abundantly evident; that many of THEM did so, their lives and their sufferings evince. It will be one of the felicities of heaven, that Saints shall no longer misunderstand one another. But there want not additional evidences, that this people of Cologne were true PROTESTANTS. Egbert, a monk, and afterwards abbot of Schönauge, tells us*, that he had often disputed with these heretics, and says, "These are they who are commonly called Cathari." From his authority I shall venture to distinguish them by this name. The term corresponds to the more modern appellation of PURITANS, and most probably was affixed to them by their contemporaries, in derision and contempt. Egbert adds, that they were divided into several sects, and maintained their sentiments by the authority of Scripture. See by the confession of an enemy their veneration for the divine word, and their constant use of it, in an age when the authority of Scripture was weakened, and its light exceedingly obscured, by a variety of traditions and superstitions. "They are armed," says the same Egbert, "with all those passages of Holy Scripture, which in any degree seem to favour their views; with these they know how to defend themselves, and to oppose the Catholic truth, though they mistake entirely the true sense of Scripture,

* Allix, p. 149.

which cannot be discovered without great judgment."—"They are increased to great multitudes throughout all countries—their words eat like a canker. In Germany we call them Cathari; in Flanders they call them Piphles; in French Tisserands, because many of them are of that occupation*." Bernard himself also, a Frenchman, speaks of both sexes of them as weavers; and it became not a man of his piety to speak degradingly of the humble labours of peaceful industry. But such were the times! monastic sloth appeared then more holy than useful mechanical occupations. We seem, however, by comparing together several fragments of information, to have acquired some distinct ideas of these Cathari: they were a plain, unassuming, harmless, and industrious race of Christians, condemning, by their doctrine and manners, the whole apparatus of the reigning idolatry and superstition, placing true religion in the faith and love of Christ, and retaining a supreme regard for the divine word. Neither in that, nor in any other age, since the propagation of the Gospel of Christ, have the fanciful theories of philosophers contributed to enlighten or improve mankind in religious matters. It is a strict attention to the revealed word, which, under the influence of the divine Spirit, has alone secured the existence of a holy seed in the earth, who should serve God in righteousness; though they might frequently be destitute of learning and every secular advantage; as seems to have been the case with the Cathari. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." CENT. XII.

It appears also that their numbers were very considerable in this century; and that Cologne, Flanders, the south of France, Savoy, and Milan, were their principal places of residence.

"They declare," says Egbert, "that the true

* That is, weavers; See Du Pin, Cent. XII. p. 88.

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faith and worship of Christ is no where to be found but in their meetings, which they hold in cellars and weaving-rooms. If ever they do accompany the people, with whom they dwell, to hear mass, or to receive the sacrament, they do it in dissimulation, that they may be thought to believe what they do not; for they maintain, that the priestly order has perished in the Roman Church, and is preserved only in their sect." He gives, however, and at too great a length to be here inserted, some noble testimonies of the soundness of their doctrine, in the rejection of purgatory, prayers for the dead, and the like.

Testimonies in favour of the Cathari.

I am obliged to collect, from thinly-scattered materials, the evidences of the true character of these Cathari; and much has, I think, already appeared in their favour, from the mouths of enemies. Egbert, we see, allows, in perfect agreement with Bernard, that they were not Separatists, in the modern sense of the word, and that they attended the public service and sacraments of the general Church. I suppose they knew how to make a practical distinction between what still remained divinely excellent in the Church, and what was idolatrous and corrupt. They seem to have conformed to the public worship, much in the same manner as the Apostles themselves did to the Jewish Church, while it existed, still preserving an union among themselves in worship, and in hearing sermons, so far as the iniquity of the times would permit. That which Egbert charges to their hypocrisy, I should think admits of a more liberal construction. It may appear to deserve the name of candour and even of charity. He, who agrees with you in practice, so far as you are right, ought to be respected for his conformity, notwithstanding that in things, which he deems wrong, he explicitly opposes you.—It were to be wished, that all serious Christians had acted in that manner, and had not

been so hasty, as some of them have been, in forming a total separation from the general Church, then the happy influence of their views in religion might have spread more powerfully; nor is there any particular danger that they themselves would have received infection from the world, while they were estranged from it in practice and in manners. After all, circumstances may arise, when an entire separation from the whole body of nominal Christians may become necessary to the people of God. But this should never be attempted with precipitation. And the meekness and charity, which the Cathari exhibited in this point, seem highly laudable. He also, who has observed so much of the world, as to perceive that a deliberate system of hypocrisy usually prevails among a collection of idle vagrants, but seldom or never among men who subsist by patient industry, will be little moved by Egbert's charge of dissimulation. CENT. XII.

The same Egbert confesses also, that they had many things mingled with their master's doctrine, which are not to be found among the ancient Manichees. "They are also," says he, "divided among themselves: what some of them say is denied by others." If the Cathari held some doctrines quite distinct from Manicheism, it should seem, that the whole charge of that antient odious heresy, might be nothing more than a convenient term of reproach. Even Bernard, who appears to have been extremely ill informed concerning this people, remarks, that they had no particular father of their heresy;—an observation, which may imply more than he was willing to allow, namely, that they were not heretics, but Christians. As to the diversity of sentiments among themselves, what denomination of Christians ever existed, who, in some smaller matters, did not maintain several diversities?

The people continued in a state of extreme persecution, throughout this century. Galdinus, bishop The Cathari persecuted throughout

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thiscentury. Galdinus of Milan inveighed against them for 8 or 9 years till his death, A. D. 1173.

of Milan, who had inveighed against them during the eight or nine years of his episcopacy*, died in the year 1173, by an illness contracted through the excess of his vehemence in preaching against them.

There is a piece, intitled, "The noble Lesson," written undoubtedly by one of the Cathari, which in the body of it says, eleven hundred years are already passed, since it was written thus; "for we are in the last time†." The writer, supposing that the world was drawing near to an end, exhorts his brethren to prayer, watching, and the renunciation of worldly goods. He speaks with energy of death and judgment; of the different issues of godliness and of wickedness; and, from a review of the Scripture history, connected with the experience of the times in which he lived, concludes, that there are but few that shall be saved.

The first principle of those, says he, who desire to serve God, is to honour God the Father, to implore the grace of his glorious Son, and the Holy Ghost, who enlightens us in the way of truth. This is the Trinity, full of all power, wisdom and goodness, to whom we ought to pray for strength to overcome the devil, the world, and the flesh, that we may preserve soul and body in love. To the love of God, he observes, the love of our neighbour

* Allix, p. 153.

† The manuscript of this composition was given to the public library of the University of Cambridge, by Sir Samuel Morland in the year 1658. The people of whom the author speaks, are called Wallenses or Vaudes, from the vallies of Piedmont. They afterwards were called Waldenses, from Peter Waldo, of whom hereafter; and by that name they are known to this day. But by the date 1100 they were evidently a distinct people before his time, and, most likely, had existed, as such, for some generations. The seeds of the Cathari had, in all probability, been sown by Claudius of Turin, in the ninth century. The whole of the "noble Lesson," is given us by Sir Samuel Morland, in his history of the Churches of Piedmont. Allix, 160. Morland's Hist.

should be joined, which comprehends the love even of our enemies. He speaks of the believer's hope of being received into glory. He explains the origin of all that evil which reigns in the world; and traces it up to the sin of Adam, which brought forth death; whence, says he, Christ hath redeemed us by his own death. He asserts the necessity of holiness in order to salvation. He explains the spirituality of the law of God, and describes the punishment of transgressors as the effect of divine justice and goodness. He illustrates the holiness of the divine character, in the economy of the Old Testament, and in the history of the Israelites, and delineates the purity and perfection of the Gospel precepts. He relates the great historical facts of Christianity, and makes some just observations on the spirit of persecution. Very remarkable is the character which he gives of the Vaudes in his own time, contrasted with that of their enemies. Let the reader consider, whether we have not here the flock of Christ among wolves. "If a man," says he, "love those, who desire to love God and Jesus Christ; if he will neither curse, nor swear, nor act deceitfully, nor live in lewdness and injustice, nor avenge himself of his enemies, they presently say, the man is a Vaudes; he deserves to be punished: and iniquitous methods are then used to rob him of the fruits of his lawful industry. Such a one, however, consoles himself with the hope of eternal salvation." He represents their enemies as supposing themselves to be good men and true Christians; and exposes their folly in placing hopes on a death-bed repentance, the priestly absolution and masses.

He roundly condemns the whole system of Antichrist, which prevailed in his time, particularly the fatal doctrine of priestly absolution. He describes the true practical principles of Christian godliness and declares that no other divine revelation is to be expected. He speaks with equal simplicity and

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strength of the last judgment, and of the everlasting punishments of the wicked; "from which," says he, "may God deliver us, if it be his blessed will, and give us to hear what he shall say to his elect, Come hither, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world, where ye shall have true pleasure, riches, and honour. May it please the Lord, who formed the world, that we may be of the number of his elect, to dwell in his court for ever. Praised be God. Amen."

Such was the provision of divine Grace, to take out of a corrupt and idolatrous world of nominal Christians, a people formed for himself, who should show forth his praise, and who should provoke the rest of mankind by the light of true humility, and holiness; a people, singularly separate from their neighbours in spirit, manners, and discipline; rude indeed, and illiterate, and not only discountenanced, but even condemned by the few real good men, who adhered altogether to the Romish Church, condemned, because continually misrepresented. I know not a more striking proof of that great truth of the divine Word, that, in the worst of times, the Church shall exist, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

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THE WRITINGS OF BERNARD REVIEWED.

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In this chapter I shall take notice of some of those parts of Bernard's writings which bear no relation to the controversies that have already engaged our attention.

Bernard's epistles.

His epistles come first under our consideration; and, among these, the epistle directed to Bruno,

elected archbishop of Cologne, deserves the attention of pastors, and of every person who aspires to the most important of all functions. CENT. XII.

"You * ask of me, illustrious Bruno, whether you ought to acquiesce in the desires of those, who would promote you to the office of a bishop. What mortal can presume to decide this? Perhaps God calls you; who may dare to dissuade? Perhaps he does not; who may advise you to accept? Whether the calling be of God, or not, who can know, except the Spirit, who SEARCHES THE DEEP THINGS of GOD, or he, to whom the Spirit may reveal it? Your humble, but awful confession, in your letter, renders it still more difficult to give advice; so grievously, and, as I believe, with truth, do you condemn the course of your past life. For, it cannot be denied, that such a life is unworthy of so sacred an office. But you fear on the other side, and I also have the same apprehensions, that it may be wrong not to improve the talent of knowledge committed to you, though your conscience do thus accuse you; only it may be observed, that you may faithfully employ that talent in some other method, less extensive indeed, but less hazardous. I own I am struck with a serious dread: I speak freely to you, as to my own soul, what I really think, when I consider from what, and to what you are called; especially, as no time for repentance will intervene, through which the passage, however dangerous, might be made. And truly, the right order of things requires that a man should take care of his own soul, before he undertake the care of the souls of others. But what if God hasten his grace, and multiply his mercy toward you? Blessed indeed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. For who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? If God justify, who is he that condemns?

* Ep. 8. Vol. I.

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The thief obtained salvation in this compendious method. One and the same day he confessed his sins, and was introduced into glory. The cross was to him a short passage from a region of death into the land of the living, and from the mire of corruption into the paradise of pleasure. This sudden remedy of godliness the happy sinful woman found, when on a sudden, where sin had abounded, grace began also to abound. Without a long course of penitential labour her many sins were forgiven.—It is one thing, however, to obtain a speedy remission; another, from a life of transgression, to be promoted to a bishopric. I can give no decisive opinion. But there is a duty, which we may perform for a friend without danger, and not without fruit; we may give him the suffrage of our prayers to God on his behalf. Leaving to God the secret of his own counsel, we may earnestly implore him to work in you and concerning you, what is becoming in his sight, and what is for your real good."

Bruno having accepted the archbishopric, Bernard wrote thus to him *. "If all, who are called to the ministry, are of necessity called also to the heavenly kingdom, the archbishop of Cologne is safe indeed. But if Saul and Judas were elected, the one to a crown, the other to the priesthood by God himself; and the Scripture, which asserts this, cannot be broken, the archbishop of Cologne has reason to fear. If that sentence also be now as true as ever, namely, that God hath not chosen many noble, mighty, and wise, has not the archbishop of Cologne a three-fold reason for solicitude? He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger †, is the voice of Wisdom itself. May I always deal with my friends in the language of salutary fear, not of fallacious adulation! To that he directs me, who says, Blessed is the man that

* Ep. 9. † Luke xxii. 26.

feareth alway*. From this he dissuades me, who says, O my people, those who lead thee cause thee to err†." CENT. XII.

In so serious a light appeared to Bernard the nature of the pastoral office. Do men in our times seek for eminent ecclesiastical situations with such impressions? Or, do secular gains frequently make a predominant part of their views? Perhaps there is not any one point of all practical religion, in which the ancients may more advantageously be compared with the moderns, than in the subject of the pastoral office, with regard to the ideas of its importance, and the qualifications which it requires!

In ‡ another epistle to Guigo and his brethren, Carthusian monks, he describes the nature of true charity. "There is one, who confesses to the Lord, because he is mighty; there is another, who confesses to him, because he is good to the Confessor; and a third, who confesses to him, because he is simply good. The first is a slave, and fears for himself; the second is mercenary, and desires his own interest merely; the third is a Son, and behaves dutifully to a Father. He, who lives under the predominance of fear, or of desire of his own interest, is selfish; but charity seeketh not her own. When a man prefers his own will to the eternal law of God, he perversely attempts to imitate the Creator, who is a law to himself. Alas! In us such a spirit binds us downward to death and hell. He, who will not be sweetly ruled by the divine Will, is penally governed by himself, and he, who casts off the easy yoke and light burden of love, must suffer the intolerable load of self-will. My Lord God, may I breathe under the light burden of love, nor be restrained by slavish fear, nor allured by mercenary desire; but may I be led by thy free Spirit,

* Prov. xxviii. 14. † Isaiah iii. 12. ‡ Ep. 11. p. 28.

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which may witness with my spirit, that I am thy child! Love, indeed, is not without fear and desire; but it sanctifies and regulates them both. But, because we are carnal, our love is carnal at first, which, if it be directed in right order, improving in its steps under the conduct of grace, will be consummated by the Spirit. In the first place, a man loves himself on his own account; and, when he finds that he is not sufficient for his own happiness, he begins, by faith, to seek after God as necessary for him. He then loves God in the second degree, but for himself, not for the sake of God. But when, through the urgency of his wants, he has been brought to cultivate acquaintance with God, by degrees God himself begins to be known as he is, and of course to be loved: having tasted that the Lord is gracious, he passes to the third degree, to love God for what he is in himself. In this degree he stops, and I do not know that any man in this life attains a fourth, namely, that a man should love himself only on account of God. Let them assert this, who have found it: to me, I own, it seems impossible. But it will take place, when the good and faithful servant shall be introduced into the joy of his Lord."

Let this suffice for a small specimen of the metaphysical doctrine of charity, on which there has been so much controversy in different ages. The gradual progress of spirituality in religion seems to be justly described by Bernard; and the plain dictates of common sense do evidently restrain the flights of his fancy. For, in truth, what is the amount of all the metaphysics, which good men have written, concerning the disinterested love of God, but this, that it ought to be sincere, not selfish; and does not the common meaning of the word love teach us this? If I may be said to love a friend for the sake of my own interest, it is, at least, a very improper mode of speech; for, in strict

propriety I love not him, but my own interest, or some gain which I conceive attainable through him. On the other hand, to talk of loving God, and relinquishing self-love, is unnatural and idle romance. On this subject then, which has tortured the minds of pious souls, it would be wise to stick to common sense, which knows no repugnance between the love of God and self-love, though the latter ought in all cases to be subordinate to the former: and this is the point, which Bernard seems to have understood and maintained. The greatest defect in the letter seems to be that, which was common to the age, namely, the want of a distinct and orderly description of the FAITH of the Gospel, which alone can work the love which he describes. CENT. XII.

In another epistle *, he comments very justly on the judicial ignorance, which St. Paul describes as the punishment from God on those who knew God, and yet glorified him not as God †. "But," says he, "God who calleth things that be not, as though they were, in compassion to those, who are reduced, as it were, to nothing, hath, in the mean time, given us to relish by faith, and to seek by desire, that hidden manna, of which the Apostle says, Your life is hid with Christ in God ‡. I say in the mean time, because we cannot yet contemplate it according to its nature, nor fully embrace it by love. Hence we begin to be something of that new creature, which will at length become a perfect man, and attain the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; and this will take place beyond doubt, when righteousness shall turn again to judgment, and the desire of the traveller shall be changed into the fulness of love. For, if faith and desire initiate us here when absent, understanding and love will consummate us when present. And, as faith leads to full knowledge, so desire leads to perfect love.—By these two arms of

* 18. p. 35. † Rom. ii. ‡ Coloss. iii. 3.

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the soul, understanding and love, it comprehends the length and depth, and breadth and height; and Christ is all these things." He goes on to expose the folly of seeking the praise of men, and the inconsistency of this spirit with the humility which becomes creatures so empty and vain.

Bernard, having been addressed in terms of great respect by Rainald, an abbot *, with his usual humility shows how averse he was to hear himself commended. "Indeed," says he, "by extolling you depress me. But, that I may not sink under the pressure, I am consoled by the testimonies of divine truth: it is good for me that I have been in trouble, that I may learn thy statutes. Such is the marvellous efficacy of the Word of God, that while it humbles, it exalts us. This is indeed the kind and powerful operation of the Word, by whom all things were made; and thus, indeed, Christ's yoke becomes easy, and his burden light. Light, indeed, is his burden. For what can be lighter than a load, which even carries every person, who bears it? A burden which unburdens the soul? In all nature I seek to find some resemblance to this, and I seem to discover a shadow of it in the wings of the bird, which are borne by the creature, and yet sustain and support its flights through the open firmament of heaven."

To undertake pilgrimages to Jerusalem was the folly of the times. An abbot, John Carnotensis, was seized with this infatuation. Bernard, however, rebuked † his zeal, and endeavoured to convince him, that he ought not to abdicate the pastoral care which had been committed to him. The chief argument which supported John in this scheme, was drawn from the strength and vehemence of his desires. It is the usual plea of all, who really deserve the imputation of enthusiasm in religion;

* Ep. 72. p. 73. † Ep. 82. p. 85.

and it is sufficiently answered by Bernard. "You say, whence should I have so strong a desire, if it be not from God? With your good leave I will speak my sentiments. Stolen waters are sweet: and whoever is not ignorant of Satan's devices, will not hesitate to say, that this poisonous sweetness is infused into your thirsting heart by a minister of Satan, transformed into the appearance of an angel of light." CENT. XII.

Bernard de Portis was a young man of the Carthusian order, and had been elected bishop of a Church among the Lombards. Bernard, however, thinking him unfit for the situation, wrote to pope Innocent his sentiments; which had so great authority, as to prevent the young man's consecration. "It is, indeed, worthy of your dignity, to place a hidden light in a conspicuous situation. Let it be placed, if you please, on a candlestick, that it may be a burning and shining light, but only in a place where the violence of the wind may not prevail to extinguish it. Who knows not the restless and insolent spirit of the Lombards? What can a young man of a weak body, and accustomed to solitude, do amidst a barbarous, turbulent, and stormy people? His sanctity and their perverseness, his simplicity and their deceitfulness, will not agree together. Let him be reserved, if you please, for a more suitable situation, and for a people, whom he may so govern as to profit; and let us not lose, by a precipitate preferment, the fruit which may be reaped in due time*."

To Baldwin†, whom he had dismissed from his own monastery, and appointed abbot of the monastery of Reate, he writes with that vehemence of zeal and affection, which characterize his writings. "Doctrine, example, and prayer," he recommends as the three things which constitute a pastor. The

* Ep. 155. p. 157. † Ep. 201. p. 139.

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last of the three he particularly recommends, as "that, which gives grace and efficacy to the labours of the preacher, whether these labours be of word or of deed."

See how the views of eternity mingle with the charitable affections of Bernard, and how familiar, and, at the same time, how animating were his prospects of the last day! "I long for your presence," says he to a friend*, "but when? At least in the city of our God; if in truth we have here no continuing city, but seek one to come. There, there shall we see, and our heart shall rejoice. In the mean time, I shall be delighted with what I hear of you, hoping and expecting to see you face to face in the day of the Lord, that my joy may be full. In addition to the many good things which I constantly hear of you, let me beg your earnest prayers for us."

Bernard's letter to the Pope Eugenius.

To † Eugenius his disciple, newly advanced to the pontificate, of whom we have already given some account, he writes with an ardour of sincere piety, which might induce one to forget, if any thing could, the vices of the popedom itself, as well as the pitiable superstitions, with which early habits had clouded the honest devotion of Bernard. "I waited," says he, "for some time, if perhaps, one of my sons might return, and assuage a father's grief, by saying, Joseph thy son liveth, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. No account arriving, I write, indeed, not from inclination, but from necessity, in compliance with the requests of friends, to whom I could not deny the little services, which the few days I yet may have to live may allow.—I envy not your dignity, because what was wanting to me, I trust I have in him, who not only comes after me, but also by me. For, dignified as you are, I have begotten you through the Gospel. What then

* Ep. 204. p. 195. † Ep. 238. p. 234.

is our hope, our joy, and crown of rejoicing? Are not you—in the presence of God?—It remains, that this change being made in your circumstances, the state of the Church may be changed also for the better. Claim nothing from her for yourself, except that you ought to lay down your life for her sake, if it be necessary. If Christ has sent you, you will reckon that you came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. A genuine successor of Paul will say with him, 'Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy*.' Peter's successor will hear Peter's voice, 'not as lords over God's heritage, but as ensamples to the flock†.' —All the church of the Saints rejoices in the Lord, expecting from you, what it seemed to have had in none of your predecessors for many ages past. And should not I rejoice?—I own I do so, but with trembling. For, though I have laid aside the name of a father, I still have toward you a father's fear, anxiety, affection, and bowels. I consider your elevation, and I dread a fall: I consider the height of dignity, and I startle at the appearance of the abyss, which lieth beneath. You have attained a higher lot, but not a safer; a sublimer station, but not a securer. Remember, you are the successor of him who said, "silver and gold have I none‡." He then explains the particular business, on occasion of which he wrote at this time; and he desires him to act in such a manner, "that men may know that there is a prophet in Israel." "O that I might see before I die the Church of God, as in antient times, when the Apostles let down their nets for a draught, not for silver and gold, but of souls! How do I wish you to inherit the voice of him, who said, thy money perish with thee§! O voice of thunder! let all who

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* 2 Cor. i. 13.
† 1 Pet. v. 3.
‡ Acts iii. 6.
§ Acts viii. 20.

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wish ill to Zion be confounded at its sound! Many now say in pleasing expectation, the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Many say in their hearts, the flowers appear in our land. Take courage then, and be strong. But, in all your works, remember that you are a man, and let the fear of him, who restraineth the spirit of princes, be ever before your eyes. What a number of pontiffs before you have in a short time been removed! By constant meditation, amidst the blandishments of this fading glory, remember your latter end. Those, in whose seat you now sit, you will doubtless follow to the grave."

It cannot be denied, that the zeal, the sincerity, the purity of Christian doctrine, in all the essentials, at least, the charity, and the blameless manners of a reformer, appeared in Bernard. How happened it then, that numbers of illiterate weavers, as we have seen, detected the spirit of Antichrist in the popedom, and avoided its superstitions, while this abbot was imposed on by its false glare of sanctity! I suppose, BECAUSE he was an abbot. The delusive splendour of fictitious holiness, so intimately connected with Antichrist, deceived one of the most upright of human kind. It was not given him to observe the unreasonableness of expecting the completion of his pious wishes in the Church, under the auspices of the See of corruption! If he had lived at large in the world, with no predilection for the court of Rome, and had been favoured with the same divine grace, and even with no higher degree of Christian virtue, than that which he then possessed, he might have been the head of the Cathari, whom he ignorantly censured! So much do circumstances contribute to the formation of characters in life, and so much reason have many, whose piety is far inferior to that of Bernard, to be thankful, that the lot is fallen to them in pleasant places.

CENT. XII.

Bernard's treatises.

From the Epistles let us pass on to other treatises. The five books concerning Consideration*, addressed to pope Eugenius, first offer themselves to our inspection. As this pontiff was serious in his religious views, he had desired Bernard to send to him some salutary admonitions. The honest plainness of the abbot was at least equal to the unaffected humility of the pontiff. The first book is taken up with salutary cautions against that hardness of heart, which an immensity of business is ever apt to produce. Bernard, who knew the toilsome life of a pope, and the snares with which he was daily encompassed, informs Eugenius that he was seriously afraid, lest, through a despair of managing a prodigious and unmeasurable course of business with a good conscience, he should be tempted to harden his heart, and deprive himself of all conscientious sensibility. "Begin not," says he, "to ask what is meant by hardness of heart. If you fear it not, you are already under its power. That is a hard heart which dreads not itself; for it is destitute of feeling. Why do you ask me what it is? ask Pharaoh. No man was ever saved from this curse, but through that divine compassion, which, according to the prophet†, takes away the stone, and gives a heart of flesh." After a graphical description of the properties of a hard heart, he sums up the view with this sentence, It neither fears God, nor regards man. See, to what an end these accursed occupations will lead you, if you give yourself wholly to them, leaving nothing of yourself to yourself. He complains of the usual mode of the pontifical life, incessantly taken up with hearing and deciding causes; whence no room is left for prayer, teaching and instructing the Church, and meditation on the Scriptures. "The voice of law, indeed, is perpetually sounding in the court, but it is the law of

* Vol. I. p. 414. † Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

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Justinian, not of the Lord." He advises him to pity himself, and not to throw his own soul out of the list of his objects of charity, lest, in serving others perpetually, he neglect his own spiritual condition. He directs him to suppress and cut short the endless frauds and cavils of law, with which the courts abounded; to decide in a summary manner on cases evidently plain; to prefer substantial justice to the tedious parade of artificial formalities, and to animadvert with severity on the frauds of advocates and proctors, who made a traffic of iniquity. By this means he would fulfil the duties of his station with uprightness, and redeem time for privacy, contemplation and prayer.

In all this, I see the honest and pious soul of Bernard struggling against the corruption of the times. But the zeal was ineffectual. If Gregory I. lamented the load of his secular avocations, much more might Eugenius, who lived in an age still more corrupt, and upheld a pontificate still more secularized, and contaminated beyond all bounds by a system of iniquity. Even others, less exalted, and less incommoded with the shackles of the world than the pope of Rome, have found, both in civil and ecclesiastical life, the pressure of business too heavy for their minds. If they were conscientious, they were ready to sink under the difficulties; if careless and indifferent, they grew hardened in iniquity, and lost all regard to piety and virtue. An inferior clerical station is infinitely more desirable in the eyes of a pastor, who means to serve God: and dignitaries in the Church may attend with profit to the lectures addressed to a pope.

In the beginning of the second book he makes a digression on the ill success of the expedition to the Holy Land, which had been undertaken through the exhortations of himself and of pope Eugenius. Here the eloquence of Bernard seems to be at a stand. He owns, however, with reverence, the

unsearchable judgments of God; desires to take shame to himself, rather than that the glory of God should be sullied; and pronounces that man happy, who is not offended at an event so disastrous and unexpected. If the casuistry of Bernard, in this subject, appear feeble, and expose him to the derision of the profane, his humility, however, and his piety, seem unexceptionable. Recovered, as it were, from the sadness of his reflections on this humiliating occasion, he resumes the discourse on Contemplation, presses on the pontiff the duty of examining himself, and, toward the end, lays down rules of holy and charitable conversation, deserving the attention of every pastor. CENT. XII.

In * the remaining part of this treatise, as well as in that which follows on the office of bishops, the zealous abbot describes and enforces the episcopal duties with his usual vehemence. He is particularly severe on the ambition of ecclesiastics in his time. He describes them as "heaping up benefices on benefices, and restless till they can attain a bishopric, and then an archbishopric. Nor, says he, does the aspirant stop there; he posts to Rome, and by supporting expensive friendships and lucrative connexions, he looks upward still to the summit of power†." How much more usefully might the spirit of Bernard have been employed in the instruction and regulation of the Church, could he have seen that the idolatrous system, to which his early monastic habits had attached him, admitted no cure; and that a distinct separation, to which men really wise and good are never hasty to advert,

* It may be proper to mention here a remarkable testimony, which Bernard gives to the upright and disinterested conduct of Eugenius, in his third Book de Consid. Two archbishops of Germany coming to this pope to plead a cause, offered him large presents, which he refused to receive, and obliged them to send back.

† P. 478.

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was, yet, in present circumstances, justifiable and necessary.

The zeal of Bernard appears also very fervent in a small tract concerning Conversion, which contained the substance of a sermon preached at Paris before the clergy*. He insists largely and distinctly on the necessity of divine illumination, in order to genuine conversion. He exhorts his audience to self-examination; and, while he presses them to investigate their own breasts, he points out the salutary effects of a just conviction of sin! "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Who is poorer in spirit than he who finds in himself no rest, no place where to lay his head? This is the divine economy, that he who feels the evil of sin, may learn to please God in newness of life; and he who hates his own habitation, a house of pollution and misery, may be invited to a house of glory, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. No wonder that he finds it hard to believe! Does misery make a man happy? But whoever thou art, in these circumstances, doubt not: not misery, but mercy gives bliss: but then the proper seat of mercy is misery. Thus distress of mind produces humility. Wholesome is that weakness which needs the hand of the physician, and blessed is that self-despair, through which God himself will raise and establish the heart. Even here the converted soul shall find the pleasures to which he is called a hundred-fold greater than those which he has relinquished, as well as, in the world to come, eternal life. Expect not from us a description of their nature. The Spirit alone reveals them; they are to be known only by experience. Not erudition, but unction teaches here; not knowledge, but inward consciousness comprehends them. That the memory of past sins should remain, and the stain of them be taken away, what power can

* P. 489. † Matt. v. 3.

effect this? The word alone, quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword. 'Thy sins are forgiven.' Let the Pharisee murmur, 'Who can forgive sins, but God alone?' He, who speaks thus to me, is God. His favour blots out guilt, so that sin shall remain on the memory, but no longer, as before, discolour it. Remove damnation, fear, confusion, as they are removed by full remission; and our past sins will not only cease to hurt us, but will also work together for good, that we may devoutly thank Him, who has forgiven them." With such energy of evangelical piety does Bernard preach the doctrines of grace and conversion to the clergy; an energy sullied, indeed, and obscured with that mysticism, which the solitude of monks always encouraged, yet substantially sound in its nature, and founded on the fundamental truths of the Gospel. Toward the close, he rebukes and exhorts the clergy as such, and bewails that intemperate ambition, which moved, and, may I not say, still moves, so many to precipitate themselves into divine functions from secular views? Let a sentence or two on this subject close our review of this sermon, and let those apply the rebuke to themselves, whose practice seems to speak this language, namely, that the ministry is the only office in the world, in which presumption is a virtue, and modesty a vice. "Men run every where into sacred orders, and catch at an office revered by spirits above, without reverence, without consideration; in whom, perhaps, would appear the foulest abominations, if we were, according to Ezekiel's prophecy, to dig into the walls, and contemplate the horrible things which take place in the house of God*."

CENT. XII.

The sermons of our author on Solomon's Song, demonstrate that he was well acquainted with vital godliness. In the 36th he shows the various ways

Bernard's sermons.

* Ezek. viii. 8, 9, 10.

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by which knowledge puffeth up*. "Some," says he "wish to know, merely for the sake of knowing; a mean curiosity. Some wish to know, that they themselves may be known; a mean vanity. Some seek for knowledge from lucrative motives; an avaricious baseness. Some desire to know, that they may edify their neighbour; this is charity. Others, that they may be edified; this is wisdom." On the whole, he owns that the cultivation of knowledge is good for instruction, but that the knowledge of our own weakness is more useful for salvation.

In the 74th sermon on the same divine book†, Bernard lays open something of his own experience on the operations of the Holy Spirit, and illustrates our Saviour's comparison of them to the wind; "thou knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth‡." After a preamble, full of cautious modesty, and the most unaffected reverence, he says, "I was sensible, that he was present with me; I remembered it after his visits were over; sometimes I had a presentiment of his entrance, but I never could feel his entrance or his exit. Whence he came, and whither he departed; by what way he entered, or left me, I confess that I am even now ignorant: and no wonder, for his footsteps are not known§. You ask then, since all his ways are unsearchable, whence could I know that he was present? His presence was living and powerful: it awakened my slumbering soul: it moved, softened, and wounded my heart, which had been hard, stony, and distempered. It watered the dry places, illuminated the dark, opened those which were shut, inflamed the cold, made the crooked straight, and the rough ways plain; so that my soul blessed the Lord, and all that was within me praised his holy name. I had no evidence of the Lord's presence with me by

* P. 1404. † P. 1529. ‡ John iii. 8. § Ps. lxxvii. 19.

any of the senses; only from the motion of my heart, I understood that he was with me; and, from the expulsion of vices, and the suppression of carnal affections, I perceived the strength of his power: from the discernment and conviction of the very intents of my heart, I admired the depth of his wisdom: from some little improvement of my temper and conduct, I experienced the goodness of his grace: from the renovation of my inward man, I perceived the comeliness of his beauty; and from the joint contemplation of all these things, I trembled at his majestic greatness. But because all these things, on his departure, became torpid and cold, just as if you withdrew fire from a boiling pot, I had a signal of his departure. My soul must be sad till he return, and my heart is again inflamed with his love; and let that be the evidence of his return. With such experience of the divine Word, if I use the language of the spouse, in recalling him, when he shall absent himself; while I live, her word, 'return*,' shall be familiar to me. As often as he leaves me, so often shall he be recalled, that he may restore to me the joy of his salvation; that is, that he may restore to me himself. Nothing else is pleasing, while he is absent, who alone is pleasure: and I pray that he may not come empty, but full of grace and truth, as he was wont to do." Then he goes on to explain the well-tempered mixture of gravity and delight, of fear and joy, of which all true converts are the subjects; and he supports his description by that apposite quotation, "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto him with trembling†."

CENT. XII.

It appeared not impertinent to the design of a history like this, to lay before the reader the inmost soul of a Saint of the twelfth century, confessing and describing the vicissitudes of spiritual consola-

* Canticles vi. 13. † Ps. ii. 11.

CHAP. IV.

tions and declensions, which, with more or less varieties, in all ages of the Church are known to real Christians. I know that much caution is necessary in speaking of them; but if we speak according to the divine oracles, as Bernard seems to do, it should be a "small thing with us to be judged of man's judgment." The doctrine of regeneration itself, with all the mixed effects of spiritual health and sickness, in a fallen creature, is foolishness to the natural man*. If any man, however, have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his†. It will be the wisdom of mere nominal Christians not to deride, but to seek for the Holy Spirit; and while godly souls estimate his presence or his absence, by such marks and effects as Bernard describes, they will not only be free from enthusiasm, but will also make it their constant aim, not to grieve the Spirit of God, by which they are sealed to the day of redemption.

In the 78th sermon on the Canticles, he describes the Church as predestinated before all time, that it should be the spouse of Christ, and supports his observation from the words of St. Paul‖. He speaks of the influence of the Holy Spirit, and of the conversion of sinners as the effect of this predestination. "Yet Emmanuel," says he, "is the Personage, who was of us, and for us was clothed with our curse, and had the appearance, not the reality of our sin."‡

In a sermon on the beginning of the 91st Psalm, he answers a question, which obviously arises to the mind of a serious person exercised in experimental godliness. Both the question and the answer deserve to be given in the author's own words. "What is the reason, that though we pray and supplicate incessantly, we cannot attain that abundance of grace which we desire? Think you that God is become avaricious, or indigent, impotent, or

* 1 Cor. ii. 14. † Rom. viii. 9. ‡ P. 1544.
‖ Eph. i. former part.

inexorable? Far, far from us be the thought: but he knows our frame. We must not, therefore, cease from petitioning, because, though he gives not to satiety, he gives what is needful for support; though he guards us against excessive heat, he cherishes us, as a mother, with his warmth. As the mother sees the hawk approaching, and expands her wings that her young ones may enter and find a safe refuge, so his bosom being prepared, and, as it were, dilated for us, the ineffable kindness of our God is extended over us. This is a dispensation adapted to the infirmity of our condition; even grace itself must be moderated, lest we fall into an undue elevation of mind, or a precipitate indiscretion*." CENT. XII.

"Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost?" is the serious question, which the Church of England asks of all her candidates for the ministry. Let him who would answer it conscientiously, ask his own heart, what he feels of Bernard's description, which, if not an accurate answer to the question, may, however, furnish the attentive reader with some salutary contemplations. "He who is called to instruct souls, is called of God, and not by his own ambition; and what is this call, but an inward incentive of love, soliciting us to be zealous for the salvation of our brethren? So often as he, who is engaged in preaching the Word, shall feel his inward man to be excited with divine affections, so often let him assure himself that God is there, and that he is invited by him to seek the good of souls. Truly, I love to hear that preacher, who does not move me to applaud his eloquence, but to groan for my sins. Efficacy will be given to your voice, if you appear to be yourself persuaded of that, to which you advise me.

* B. 2. C. 15. Florum Bernardi. A small treatise, from which are extracted some of the most beautiful passages of this author.

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That common rebuke will then at least belong not to you;—"thou who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself*?"

See how divinely he describes the grace of God in the Gospel. "Happy is he alone, to whom the Lord imputeth not sin. To have him propitious to me, against whom alone I have sinned, suffices for all my righteousness. Not to impute my sins, is, as it were, to blot out their existence. If my iniquity is great, thy grace is much greater. When my soul is troubled at the view of her sinfulness, I look at thy mercy, and am refreshed. It lies in common; it is offered to all, and he only who rejects it, is deprived of its benefit. Let him rejoice, who feels himself a wretch deserving of perpetual damnation. For the grace of Jesus still exceeds the quantity or number of all crimes. My punishment, says Cain, is too great for me to expect pardon. Far be the thought. The grace of God is greater than any iniquity whatever. He is really kind and merciful, plenteous in goodness, ready to forgive. His very nature is goodness; his property is to have mercy. Indeed he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. But mercy he draws from his own nature; condemnation is a work to which we in a measure compel him. He is, therefore, not called the Father of vengeance, but the FATHER OF MERCIES†."

The following thought, concerning temptations, is striking. "In creation, in redemption, and other common benefits, God is common to all; in temptations, the elect have him to themselves. With such special care does he support and deliver, that he may seem, as it were, neglecting all others, to confine his care to the tempted soul‡."

We have already given a small specimen of his

* In Cantic. Serm. 58. p. 156. Florum.
† From various Serm. Flor. 229. ‡ Flor. 257.

own experience, in regard to the various operations of the Holy Spirit. From different sermons we may now see the practical use which he makes of the doctrine. "It is a dangerous thing," says he, "to be insensible of the presence or absence of the Holy Spirit. For how shall his presence be sought, whose absence is not known? And how shall he, who returns to console us, be worthily received, if his presence be not felt? May the unction, therefore, be never removed from us, the unction * which teaches us of all things, that when the Holy Spirit comes he may find us ready. He who walks in the Spirit, never remains in one state. His way is not in himself; but as the Spirit dispenses to him, according to his good pleasure, now more faintly, now more eagerly, he forgets the things which are behind, and reaches forth to the things which are before. Distrust not, when thou findest weariness and torpor; seek the hand of thy Guide, beseeching him to draw thee, till thou be enabled to run the way of God's commandments. And, on the other hand, beware of presumptuous confidence, when thou walkest in the light of divine consolation, lest, when he withdraws his hand, thou be more dejected than it becomes a Christian to be †."

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The divine life was then, it seems, understood in the twelfth century, that same life which is felt in all ages by holy men, which has its foundations in the genuine doctrines of grace, which alone produces true virtue upon earth, which is the comfort of real Christians, and the ridicule of mere philosophers, whether nominally Christians or not, and which will issue in heavenly glory. That after the greatest attainments and the most earnest efforts, a Christian should still feel himself infected with sin, has often been matter of great vexation and surprise to the most pious and the most intelligent persons. Great

* * 1 John ii. 27. † Id. 44, &c.

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mistakes have been committed on this subject; some have, at length, induced themselves to believe, that in-dwelling sin has been totally expelled from their breasts; others have given themselves up to unprofitable solicitude and dejection. A great part of the mystery of practical godliness lies, no doubt, in the due conception of the case, and in the practical regulation of the heart, concerning it. Let us hear Bernard on this point; he speaks in unison with the soundest Christians in all ages; and, what is more, with St. Paul, in Rom. vii. "Let no man say in his heart, these are small evils; I care not for them; it is no great matter, if I remain in these venial sins. This is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and confirmed impenitence. On the other hand, evil cannot altogether be eradicated or extirpated from our hearts, while we are in the world. However great thy proficiency, thou art mistaken, if thou think sin to be dead. Whether thou wilt or not, the Jebusite will dwell within thy borders. He may be subdued, not exterminated. Sin, the disease of the soul, cannot be taken away, till we are freed from the body. By the grace of God it may be repressed, so that it shall not REIGN in us, but it is ejected only at death.—In many things we offend all*: let no man despise or neglect these evils; nor yet should the Christian be too solicitous concerning them; He will forgive us even with pleasure, provided we confess our guilt. In these evils of daily incursion, negligence is culpable, and so is immoderate fear; for there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus†, and who consent not to the motions of concupiscence. That we may be humbled, the Lord suffers concupiscence itself still to live in us; and grievously to afflict us, that we may feel what grace can do for us, and may always have recourse to his aid‡." Such were the humble

* James iii. 2. † Rom. viii. 1. ‡ Flor. 373.

sentiments of this holy personage concerning this subject, and so equally remote was he from the delusive pride of the Perfectionist, and the flagitious negligence of the Antinomian. CENT. XII.

I shall conclude this review of Bernard's works, with a short extract *, which expresses the foundation of his Christian hopes; and it is that, in which all real Christians, in all ages, will cordially concur with him. "I consider three things, in which all my hope consists, the love of adoption, the truth of the promise, and the power of performance. Let my foolish heart murmur as much as it please, and say, Who art thou, and how great is that glory, or by what merits dost thou expect to obtain it? I will confidently answer, I know whom I have believed, and I am certain, that he hath adopted me in love; that he is true in promise; that he is powerful to fulfil it; for he can do what he pleaseth. This is the threefold cord, which is not easily broken, which being let down to us from our heavenly country to earth, I pray that we may firmly hold, and may he himself lift us up, and draw us completely to the glory of God, who is blessed for ever."

CHAP. V.

DEATH AND CHARACTER OF BERNARD.

No one of the ancient fathers seems to have had so little justice done to his memory as Bernard. He lived in an age so ignorant and superstitious, that Protestants are ready to ask, Can any good thing come out of the twelfth century? It is difficult, indeed, to say, whether he has been more injured by the extravagant encomiums of some, or by the CHAP. V.

* De Evang. Serm. 5.

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illiberal censures of others. Even the fictitious miracles of which the wretched accounts of his biographers are full, indirectly asperse his character, and by no uncommon association of ideas, seem to detract all credibility from the best attested narratives of his piety and virtue. While then Papists represent him as an angel, and Protestants as a narrow bigot, or a furious zealot, those who know nothing more of him than what they have learned from the prejudice of opposite extremes, are tempted to think him an object worthy of contempt, if not of detestation.

The great Roman historian, in a beautiful fragment preserved to us concerning the death of Cicero, observes, that to celebrate his character, as it deserves, a Cicero himself should be found as panegyrist *. A somewhat similar observation may be made concerning Bernard; and happily his voluminous writings, which have escaped the ravages of time, vindicate his reputation, and exhibit him to us with faithfulness and accuracy. It was necessary to be brief in my extracts; else much more numerous proofs of his genuine piety, humility, and charity, than those which the reader hath already seen, might have been adduced. Nor have I concealed his superstitious turn of mind, and the unhappy prejudices, which induced him to censure some of those, of whom "the world was not worthy," and with whose true character he was unacquainted. He was deeply tinged with a predilection for the Roman hierarchy; he had imbibed most of those errors of his time, which were not directly subversive of the Gospel; and the monastic character, which, according to the spirit of the age, appeared to be the greatest glory, seems to have much eclipsed his real virtues, and prevented his progress in true evangelical wisdom.

* Cicerone quidem laudatore opus esset. Liv. fragm.

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But if we strip him of the ascetic vest, and consider the interior endowments, he will appear to have been no mean or ordinary character. His learning was moderate; but his understanding was solid, and his judgment seldom erred in subjects or cases, where the prejudices of the age did not warp the imagination. His genius was truly sublime, his temper sanguine, his mind active and vigorous. The love of God appears to have taken deep root in his soul, and seems to have been always steady, though always ardent. His charity was equal to his zeal; and his tenderness and compassion to Christian brethren went hand in hand with his severity against the heretical, the profane, and the vicious. In humility, he was truly admirable; he scarcely seems to have felt a glimpse of pleasure on account of the extravagant praises every where bestowed upon him. His heart felt dependance on Christ, and his heavenly affections were incontestibly strong. He united much true Christian knowledge with much superstition; and this can hardly be accounted for on any other supposition, than that he was directed by an influence truly divine. For there is not an essential doctrine of the Gospel, which he did not embrace with zeal, defend by argument, and adorn by life. Socinianism in particular, under God, was by his means nipped in the bud, and prevented from thriving in the Christian world. Such was Bernard, who is generally called the last of the fathers.

Death of Bernard. A. D. 1153.

The accounts of his death, considered as compositions, are no less disgusting to a taste of tolerable correctness, than those of his life. While his friends admired him as an angel, he felt himself, by nature, a sinful fallen creature. He was about sixty-three years old, when he died of a disease in the stomach. A letter which he dictated to a friend, a very few days before his decease, is worthy of our attention, as a genuine monument of that simplicity, modesty, and piety, which had adorned his conversation. "I

CHAP. V.

received your love, with affection, I cannot say with pleasure; for what pleasure can there be to a person in circumstances replete with bitterness? To eat nothing solid, is the only way to preserve myself tolerably easy. My sensitive powers admit of no further pleasure. I am not able to close my eyes: sleep hath departed from me: and no longer procures for me the least intermission of my pain. Stomachic weakness is, as it were, the sum total of my afflictions. By day and night I receive a small portion of liquids. Every thing solid, the stomach rejects. The very scanty supply, which I now and then receive, is painful; but perfect emptiness would be still more so. If now and then I take in a larger quantity, the effect is most distressing. My legs and feet are swoln, as in a dropsy. In the midst of these afflictions, that I may hide nothing from an anxious friend, in my inner man—I speak as a vulgar person—the spirit is ready, though the flesh be weak. Pray ye to the Saviour, who willeth not the death of a sinner, that he would not delay my timely exit, but that still he would guard it. Fortify with your prayers a poor unworthy creature, that the enemy who lies in wait may find no place where he may fix his tooth, and inflict a wound. These words I have dictated, but in such a manner, that ye may know my affection by a hand well known to you *." Such were the dying circumstances of this excellent Saint. So peculiarly were they disposed, that they seemed to rebuke the ignorant admiration of his friends; and thus, through faith and patience, did he, at length, inherit the promises †.

* Vol. II. p. 1170.

† Many miracles are ascribed to Bernard by the Romish Church. He is looked on as the last of the holy Fathers; and is said to have founded 160 monasteries.

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GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.

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THIS may, in a great measure, be collected, so far as the Latin Church is concerned, from the copious account which has been given of Bernard. Of the Greek Church hardly any thing occurs which properly falls within the design of this history. Superstition, idolatry, frivolous contentions, and metaphysical niceties, attended with a lamentable want of true piety and virtue, form almost the whole of the religious phenomena in the east.

In this chaos of the Church, I can only mention a few facts and circumstances, which may throw some lights on its general state; and they shall be such as have not been considered in the history of Bernard, nor directly relate to the Waldenses, whose affairs commenced in the latter part of this century, but will deserve a strict narration.

Death of Urban, and the taking of Jerusalem by the Crusaders, A. D. 1099.

Just at the close of the foregoing century, pope Urban* held a synod of one hundred and fifty bishops, in order to promote the Crusades, and exhorted the Christian world to concur in supporting the same cause. He died in the year 1099, and Jerusalem was taken by the crusaders in the same year †. The pale of the visible Church was extended by the conquests of the western warriors, and several episcopal Sees were again formed in regions, whence the light of the Gospel had first arisen to bless mankind. But these were of short duration; and, what is much more material to be observed, while they continued, they gave no evidence, that I can find, of

* This pope, viz. Urban II. held the famous council here mentioned, at Clermont in Auvergne, A. D. 1095, for the recovery of the Holy Land.

† Baronius, Cent. XII.

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the spirit of true religion. This is a circumstance, which throws a very unpleasing shade on the whole character of the fanatical war which at that time agitated both Europe and Asia. I have exculpated the western Christians from the charge of positive injustice in undertaking it; in every other light it deserves much of the asperity of the censure, with which modern authors in general agree to treat it. Among a thousand evils which it produced, or at least encouraged, this was one, namely, that indulgencies were now diffused by the popes through Europe, for the purpose of promoting what they called the holy war. These had indeed been sold before by the inferior dignitaries of the Church, who, for money, remitted the penalties imposed on transgressors: they had not, however, pretended to abolish the punishments, which await the wicked in a future state. This impiety was reserved to the pope himself, who dared to usurp the authority which belongs to God alone. The corruption having once taken place, remained and even increased from age to age, till the time of the Reformation. It is needless to say, how subversive of all piety and virtue this practice must have been. That the Romanists did really promote this impious traffic is but too evident from their own writers *. Hence the strict propriety of St. Paul's representation of the man of sin, AS SHOWING HIMSELF THAT HE IS GOD †, is evinced; hence, the characters of those, who opposed the power and doctrine of popery in those times, receive the most ample vindication, and hence the merit of the Reformation itself may, in a great measure, be appreciated. I only add, that the whole discipline of the Church was now dissolved, and men, who had means to purchase a license to sin,

* See Mosheim, Cent. XII. p. 595. Qu. Edit. Morinus, Simon, and Mabillon, are the popish authors, who are not ashamed to vindicate this system of iniquity.

† 2 Thess. ii.

were emboldened to let loose the reins of vice, and follow, at large, their own desires and imaginations. CENT. XII.

Nor were these evils compensated by some other circumstances, which tended to promote the revival of learning in this age. Gratian, a native of Tuscany, and a monk of Bologna, made a famous collection of canon laws, and published them in 1151. His work was much facilitated by the discovery of the pandects of the emperor Justinian, which took place in 1137*. Ecclesiastical causes were henceforward tried by the canon law. To encourage the study of this science, the degrees of bachelor, licentiate, and doctor, degrees mentioned by no writer before the time of Gratian, were instituted by pope Eugenius III. the disciple of Bernard. But they were soon after introduced at Paris by Peter Lombard, who was called the master of the sentences, and were bestowed on students of divinity, as well as of law. For Lombard was supposed to have performed the same service to divinity, which Gratian his contemporary had done to law. Paris and Bologna, the former in divinity, and the latter in law, were now looked on as the greatest seminaries in Europe. In this revival of learning, our own island also bore a part. The university of Oxford, which had been founded in the time of Alfred, and had suffered much from the ravages of the Danes, came to a considerable degree of eminence in this century. The learning, as well as the impiety of the Continent, passed into England, and we shall shortly see a dreadful instance of the effects of both appearing in the university last mentioned. For while the real word of God was generally neglected, and the salutary doctrine of the Gospel was buried in darkness, the literary improvements of the times might sharpen the intellectual faculties, but could produce no

Gratian's Canon Laws, A. D. 1151.

Justinian's Pandects discovered, A. D. 1137.

* Mosheim, Cent. XII. p. 567. Bower's lives of popes, Vol. VI. p. 69. Du Pin, Cent. XII. Chap. XVII.

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benign effects on the manners of mankind. To finish this brief detail of the progress of learning, I shall add, that Cambridge had begun to be a seminary of learning some little time after Oxford, but in that view had been quite oppressed by the incursions of the Danes. It revived, however, in some degree about the year 1109, when Gislebert, with three other monks, was sent by the abbot of Croyland to his manor of Cottenham, near Cambridge. These monks went every day to Cambridge, where they hired a barn as a convenient place for public lectures. One read grammar in the morning, a second read logic at one o'clock, and a third, at three in the afternoon, gave lectures on rhetoric from Tully and Quinctilian. Gislebert himself preached on Sundays and other holidays. The barn was soon found insufficient to contain the auditors; and, therefore, accommodations were provided for the labours of these men in different parts of the town. Such is the account which Peter of Blois gives of the infant state of learning in the university of Cambridge.

Learning revives at Cambridge, A. D. 1109.

The laudable passion for intellectual improvement was strong in this century. In the room of the fathers succeeded the schoolmen, whose theology was founded by Peter Lombard. A metaphysical subtilty pervaded their investigations, and they were idolized by the ignorant, among whom should be ranked the nobility of that age, almost as much as the plebeians. The human mind, however, by exercise recovered a new tone and vigour; but learning could not communicate grace, nor even enable men to see the folly of enslaving themselves to the popedom. The influence of the bishop of Rome grew prodigious: the emperors of Germany trembled under the rod; and some of the bravest and wisest of the English princes were found unequal to a contest with the hierarchy. But to dwell on these scenes would be to forsake the path of Church-history.

Where THEN was the Church of Christ, and what

was its condition? In the general appearance of national religion she was not to be discovered. God had, however, his SECRET ONES. There might be, and probably there were, in vulgar life, various persons too poor and too insignificant to be regarded in history, who feared God and served him in the Gospel of his Son, but whom an humble station in society secured from persecution. There were also here and there some of the recluse, who practised something better than superstition. The story of Bernard has given us an illustrious instance. In the west, we have seen also the Cathari, who formed religious societies among themselves. These increased exceedingly, and assuming a new name, much better known in the latter part of the century *, were exposed to the unrighteous indignation of the then reigning powers, both in church and state. The account of this persecution will demand our particular attention, when we come to the next century. Thus the Church of Christ had a real existence in the west, and shone as a light in a dark place. In the east it is extremely difficult to discover the least vestiges of genuine piety. It is probable, however, that the Church existed among the remains of the Paulicians. For in the year 1118, Alexius Comnenus, who had zealously persecuted this people in the latter end of the foregoing century, burned a supposed Manichee, who was charged with maintaining all the absurdities of Manes. We have the account from the female historian, his own daughter, Anna Comnena, who every where idolizes the character of her father †. The supposed heretic, however, it ought to be known, rejected the worship of images as idolatry ‡; a circumstance, which at least affords a strong presumption in favour of his Christian character. The reader will hence be led to believe it not

CENT. XII.

Burning of a supposed Manichee, A. D. 1118.

* Waldenses.

† Anna Comnena, B. XV.

‡ Baron. Cent. XII.

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improbable, that there were even then some relics of a Church of God in the east. If he complain that the evidence is scanty, I can only lament that history affords no more. And if he recollect the account given of the Cathari in the memoirs of Bernard, and consider them as properly belonging to this place, he will see, that the prophecy of Christ concerning his Church, "that the gates of hell should never prevail against it," had its real completion even in the dark times which we are reviewing.

It is no small consolation to the mind of a true believer, that the most disastrous, as well as the most glorious scenes of the Church, are predicted in Scripture. The evidence of prophecy constantly accompanies the light of history, and "behold I have told you before," is the voice of our Saviour, which we hear in every age. In a council held at London in 1108, in the reign of our Henry I. a decree was issued against clerks who should cohabit with women *. This council did not mean to give an attestation to the truth of the prophecy of St. Paul, concerning the apostacy of the latter days, one circumstance of which was the prohibition of marriage †, but they fulfilled the prophecy in the clearest manner. The voices of natural conscience and of common sense were, however, by no means altogether silenced during this gloomy season. Fluentius, bishop of Florence ‡, taught publicly, that Antichrist was born, and come into the world; on which account pope Paschal II. held a council there in the year 1105, reprimanded the bishop, and enjoined him silence on that subject. Even Bernard himself inveighed so strongly against the popes and the clergy, that nothing but the obstinate prejudices of education prevented him from seeing the whole truth in this matter. It was natural for men, who

Decree of a Council in London against the marriage of clerks, A. D. 1108.

Pope Paschal II. silences the Bishop of Florence, A. D. 1105.

* Baron. Cent. XII. † 1 Tim. iv.

‡ See Bp. Newton on the prophecies, Vol. III. p. 167.

reverenced the Scriptures, and who compared what they read of Antichrist with what they saw in the Church of Rome, to express some suspicions, that the prophecy was then fulfilling, though the glare of fictitious holiness, which covered the popedom, prevented them from beholding their object with perspicuity. CENT. XII.

Our own island was rapidly advancing all this century into a state of deplorable subjection to the Roman See. Men of solid understanding, like our Henry II. lamented, struggled, and resisted, but with little effect. They felt the temporal oppression of ecclesiastical tyranny, while they were perfectly regardless of their own spiritual misery, and even aided the court of Rome in the persecution of real Christians. That same Henry II. who made so firm a stand against papal encroachments in civil matters, in the twenty-fourth year of his reign, joined with the French king in persecuting the Cathari of Toulouse, who were injuriously denominated Arians*; and, while he abused and perverted one of the finest understandings by a life of ambition and lewdness, and by supporting idolatrous religion, he himself was exposed to the severest sufferings from the papal usurpations. One instance of his barbarity deserves to be distinctly related. State of the Church in England.

Thirty men and women, who were Germans, appeared in England in the year 1159, and were afterwards brought before a council of the clergy at Oxford. Gerard their teacher, a man of learning, said, that they were Christians, and believed the doctrine of the Apostles. They expressed an abhorrence of the doctrine of purgatory, of prayers for the dead, and of the invocation of Saints. Henry, in conjunction with the council, ordered them to be branded with a hot iron on the forehead, to be whipped through Oxford, to have their clothes cut Persecutions by Henry II. A. D. 1159.

* Hoveden, p. 327.

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short by their girdles; and to be turned into the open fields; and he likewise forbad any persons, under severe penalties, to shelter or relieve them. As it was the depth of winter, they all lost their lives through cold and hunger*. They had made one female convert in England, who, through fear of similar punishment, recanted. The whole number of the Germans remained, however, patient, serene, and composed, repeating, "Blessed are those, who are persecuted for righteousness sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Their teacher Gerard, that he might be distinguished from the rest, had an additional stigma on his chin.

What a darkness must at that time have filled this island! A wise and sagacious king, a renowned university, the whole body of the clergy and laity, all united in expelling Christ from their coasts! Brief as is the account of the martyrs, it is sufficiently evident that they were the martyrs of Christ. Driven most probably from home by the rage of persecution, they had brought the light and power of the Gospel with them into England; and so totally senseless and corrupt was our nation, that none received it. It deserves to be noticed, that England was afterwards for a long time exposed to suffer more severely than most other nations, from the exactions of the popedom.

Mr. Berington observes, on occasion of this story, that none but a hero or a madman was at that time qualified to be a reformer. But a true reformer needs not to be either the one or the other. A man of understanding, who fears God, and speaks the words of soberness, if influenced by the Spirit of God, is fitted to reform mankind.

The contention between King Henry and Becket is well known. I have nothing to say of it, except that the whole affair is foreign to my purpose. There

* Neubrig. Brompt. Collect. See Henry's Hist. of Eng. Vol. III. p. 240.

is no evidence that a spirit of true religion influenced either the king or the archbishop. CENT. XII.

The pope, indeed, reigned calm and victorious throughout Europe. Nevertheless, even in Italy itself, some suspicions that he was Antichrist appeared. Joachim, abbot of Calabria, was a man renowned for learning and piety, and perhaps very deservedly. This man asserted that Antichrist was born in the Roman state, and would be exalted to the apostolic See*. Our king Richard I. being at Messina in Sicily, going upon his expedition to the Holy Land, sent for this Joachim, and with much satisfaction heard him explain the Book of the Revelation, and discourse of Antichrist. Mr. Berington gives a ludicrous account of this interview between the king and the abbot; and observes, that the "bishops who were present, and Richard, and Joachim, were equally intelligent in the mysteries of the Evangelist with any other interpreters of that day†." This gentleman is a lively, agreeable writer, and has exerted a capacity, learning, and industry, to which I have been obliged on several occasions. But the rude treatment of any part of the word of God deserves to be rebuked, whether he, who is guilty of it, be a Roman Catholic or a Protestant, or a sceptic in religion. I doubt not but some of his readers, who never examined the subject with the least attention, will be gratified with the pleasantry of his remark. But let them be told that part of the Apocalypse is very intelligible, even at present: and that all of it will probably be so before the end of time. And is not all Scripture said to be profitable?‡ It behoved not a man professing Christianity, to throw out inuendos which might have been expected only from an avowed infidel. Has the author ever examined with care the writings of expositors on the Apocalypse? Did he ever attend to Mr. Mede's

* Hoveden, p. 681. | Collier's Ecc. Hist. B. VI. p. 401.
† Hist. of Henry II. &c. p. 375. ‡ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

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elaborate and learned works on the subject? Did Sir Isaac Newton's observations on the Apocalypse ever fall into his hands? Or, to come to later times, has he ever studied the works of bishop Newton, bishop Hurd, or the late bishop Hallifax? Let him attend to any one of these, and having digested his scheme, let him then say, if he can, that our ignorant king Richard I. was as intelligent an expositor as he.

If this same Richard had been as earnest in studying the Scriptures, as he was in conducting his romantic expedition into the Holy Land, by comparing the Apocalyptic prophecies with the treatment which he himself received from the pope, he might have understood that the bishop of Rome was Antichrist. For, in a bull dated 1197, Innocent III. declared, that it was not fit that any man should be invested with authority who did not revere and obey the Holy See. In another bull, addressed to Richard, he told him, that if he opposed the execution of the decrees of the Apostolic See, he would soon convince him how hard it was to kick against the pricks. In another bull, he declared that he would not endure the least contempt of himself, or of God, whose place he held on earth, but would punish every disobedience without delay, and without respect of persons; and would convince the whole world that he was determined to act like a sovereign*. The "lion-hearted" Richard obeyed his decrees, and gave up his opposition in the cause which he had contested. Innocent, indeed, reigned in England with a power little less than despotic. This was the pope, who confirmed the doctrine of transubstantiation in the grossest sense, who reduced the two succeeding princes John and Henry III. into a state of the lowest vassalage to himself, and who enriched his creatures with the treasures of England, almost entirely at his pleasure.

Bull of Pope Innocent III. A. D. 1197.

Other Bulls of the same Pope.

* Gervas Chronicle. See Henry's 3d Vol. of Hist. of Eng.

CHAP. VII.

THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL.

THE pale of the visible Church was still farther extended in this century among the idolatrous nations; and, though the methods of propagating divine truth were too often unchristian, some missionaries seem to have been actuated by an apostolical spirit. The articles under this head are only few, but well deserve the reader's attention. CENT. XII.

Boleslaus, duke of Poland, having taken Stettin the capital of Pomerania, by storm, and laid waste the country with fire and sword, compelled the remaining inhabitants to submit at discretion. What right he had to make war on the Pomeranians at all, and if he had a right, how far he confined himself within the bounds of justice and humanity, are inquiries not easy to be answered, on account of the scantiness of our information. From such inauspicious beginnings, however, Pomerania was introduced to an acquaintance with Christianity. The conqueror endeavoured, for three years, to procure pastors and teachers from his own dominions, to instruct his new subjects, but could find none. He then engaged Otho, bishop of Bamberg, in the work. The duke of Pomerania met the bishop on his approach, and received him with much respect. The savage inhabitants, however, were with difficulty prevented from murdering him. Otho was firm, and by Christian zeal, patience, and meekness, laboured to efface the disadvantageous impressions which the military executions of Boleslaus could not fail to make on their minds. The duchess of Pomerania, with her female attendants, received the Gospel. So did the duke, with his companions, and he gave this evidence of sincerity, that he was

Otho's mission to Pomerania, A. D. 1124.

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prevailed on by the instructions of Otho to dismiss his concubines, who were twenty-four in number. This missionary was afterwards fiercely assaulted by some of the inhabitants, and escaped with great difficulty. But he bore the injury so meekly, and still persevered in his labours with such evident marks of probity and charity, that he at length established the form of Christianity among them. He * had entered on his mission in the year 1124, and from his success, was styled the apostle of the Pomeranians †. After he had carried the Gospel into Noim and other remote districts, he returned to the care of his own flock at Bamberg, where he died in 1139‡. That the work, however, was very slight among this people, appeared too plainly by the event. The Pomeranians soon after ejected the Christian pastors, and re-established the idolatry of their ancestors.

Otho returns to his flock at Bamberg, and dies, A. D. 1139.

The inhabitants of Rugen, an island which lies in the neighbourhood of Pomerania, were remarkable for their obstinate opposition to Christianity. Eric, king of Denmark, subdued them, and among other conditions of peace, imposed on them the necessity of receiving his religion. But they soon relapsed into the idolatry of their ancestors. At length Waldemar, king of Denmark, having subjected them again by his arms to the Danish crown, obliged them to deliver up to him their idol, called Swanterwith, an account of which we have seen in the history of the tenth century. Waldemar ordered it to be hewn in pieces and burned. He compelled the vanquished also to deliver to him all their sacred money: he released the Christian captives whom they held in slavery, and converted the lands which had been assigned to the pagan priests, to the support of a Christian ministry. He did

* Cent. Magd. Cent. XII. p. 16.
† Baronius, Cent. XII. See Magd. Cent.
‡ Butler, Vol. VII.

also something which was of a more salutary nature and tendency, whatever were his own motives of conduct. He furnished the ignorant savages with pastors and teachers. Among these shone Absalom, archbishop of Lunden, by whose pious labours, at length, the Gospel received an establishment in this island, which had so long baffled every attempt to evangelize it. Absalom* ought to be classed among those genuine benefactors of mankind, who were willing to spend and be spent for the good of souls. Even Jaremar, the prince of Rugen, received the Gospel with great alacrity, and not only taught his wayward subjects by his life and example, but also by his useful instructions and admonitions. Sometimes he employed menaces, but to what degree, and with what circumstances, I know not. Certain it is, that the people of Rugen from that time were in some sense, at least, evangelized. No people had ever shown a more obstinate aversion to the doctrines of Christianity. Nor were the military proceedings of Eric and Waldemar calculated to soften their animosity. In this article, however, as in the last, the characters of the missionaries ought to be distinguished from those of the princes; for, in the accounts of both the missionaries there appears very good evidence of a genuine propagation of godliness. These events in Rugen took place about the year 1168†. When I distinguish the characters of the princes from that of the missionaries, I am by no means certain that the conduct of the former was unjustifiable. The people of Rugen were a band of pirates and robbers; and it is not improbable, but that the right of self-preservation might authorize the Danish expeditions.

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Rugen in some measure evangelized, A. D. 1168.

The Finlanders were of the same character with the people of Rugen, and infested Sweden with their incursions. Eric, king of this country, van-

* Mosheim, XII. Cent. 3 Sect. Cent. Magd. XII. Cent. 13.
† Butler, Vol. X.

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quished them in war, and is said to have wept, because his enemies died unbaptized. As soon as he was master of Finland, he sent Henry, bishop of Upsal, to evangelize the barbarians. The success of the missionary was great, and he is called the apostle of the Finlanders, though he was murdered at length by some of the refractory people. How far the censure of Mosheim, on his severity to them, may be well founded, I cannot decide. The missionary seems, however, to have been pious, and to have had good intentions. The laudable conduct of his sovereign also deserves to be celebrated. Eric was excellent both as a Christian and a king. His piety provoked the derision of some impious malcontents, by whom he was attacked, while employed in public worship. The remainder of the festival, said he, I shall observe elsewhere. It was the feast of the Ascension, which he was celebrating. He went out alone to meet the murderers, that he might prevent the effusion of blood, and he died recommending his soul to God. He was slain in 1151; and his tomb still remains at Upsal, undefaced*. It may be proper to add, that Henry was an Englishman, who had taken considerable pains among the barbarous nations, before the period of his labours in Finland, and that he was stoned to death at the instigation of a murderer, whom he had endeavoured to reclaim by his censures. His death happened in the same year as that of his royal master†. This person is highly extolled by John Olaus, in his work, De rebus Gothicis‡.

Murder of Eric, A. D. 1151.

Henry, bishop of Upsal, murdered in the same year.

The Sclavonians were remarkably averse to the Gospel of Christ, and much exercised the patience and charity of Vicelinus, who preached thirty years in Holsatia and the neighbouring parts. He was

* Mosheim, Cent. XII. 552. Butler, Vol. V.

† His life was written by Benzelius Monum. Suec. p. 33. Butler, Vol. II.

‡ B. 19. C. 3. See Baron. Cent. XII.

at length appointed bishop of Oldenburg, which See was afterwards transferred to Lubec: and the fruits of his ministry were solid and glorious*. He died in 1154. All the accounts of antiquity are full of the praises of Vicelinus; and his character is briefly, but very strongly celebrated by Mosheim, with such unqualified commendations, that I cannot but wish that very learned historian had favoured us with an abridgment of his life and actions, taken from the sources of information, which he quotes, but which seem to us inaccessible. I have consulted the Centuriators, and find matter there sufficient to excite, but not to satisfy our curiosity. The little to be collected from them shall be mentioned in the next chapter. And here is an instance of that which I have had but too frequent occasion to remark, namely, an extreme scantiness of information on subjects most worthy of our researches. How willingly would the evangelical reader have excused the omission of many pages in Mosheim, if he had gratified us with an orderly account of one of the best and wisest Christian missionaries of the age †.

Vicelinus, a very shining character, who laboured thirty years among the Sclavonians. He died, A. D. 1154.

The propagation of religion in Livonia will not deserve any detail. It took place in the latter part of this century: violent and secular methods were principally used, and the wretched inhabitants were compelled to receive baptism ‡; but I know no fruits that appeared in this century worthy of the Christian name.

* Baron. Cent. XII.

† See Cent. Magd. 16. Mosheim, Cent. XII. 554. The authors quoted by Mosheim are the Cimbria literata of Mollerus, and the Res Hamburg. of Lambecius.

‡ Cent. Magd.

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WRITERS AND EMINENT PERSONS IN THIS CENTURY.

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BERNARD far outshines all the other Christian characters of the age. A very brief survey, however, of some who had the greatest reputation for piety, may not be improper.

Meginher, archbishop of Treves, is a character, of whom it were to be wished we had a more distinct account. He inveighed against the luxury and sensuality of his clergy, and so provoked their resentment, that he was obliged to undertake a journey to Rome in his own defence. By the treachery of his own clergy he was intercepted on the road, and died in prison at Parma in the year 1130*. If we had the particulars of these transactions, it is probable that he would appear to have resembled Chrysostom in his integrity, as well as in his sufferings. Meginher deserves, however, to be mentioned, because his case evinces how unsafe it was in those days to defend Christian piety, even in the midst of the visible Church of Christ.

Meginher dies in prison, A. D. 1130.

About the same time a presbyter, named Arnulph, came to Rome, and faithfully preached against the vices of the clergy. He was himself a man of unblamable life and conversation, and zealously laboured to induce the pastors of the Church to imitate the simplicity and disinterestedness of the primitive Christians. He seems to have foreseen that he should suffer for righteousness sake. "I know," said he publicly, "that ye seek my life. Ye despise me and your Creator, who redeemed you by his only begotten Son. Nor is it to be wondered

* Cent. Magd. Cent. XII, 23.

at, that ye should kill me a sinful man, who speaks to you the truth, since, if St. Peter himself were to rise from the dead; and rebuke your multiplied enormities, ye would not spare him." Arnulph was secretly murdered, and appears to have been a faithful martyr*. CENT. XII.

The orthodox sentiments of the Godhead and manhood of Jesus Christ, and the influence of both natures in the redemption, were clearly and soundly vindicated by Ricardus, in a treatise concerning the Incarnation †.

Rupert, in this century, writing on the Gospel of St. John, observes, on occasion of our Lord's declaring in the XIVth chapter of St. John, that the world neither see nor know the Holy Spirit; "that they see him not, arises from their unbelief; that they know him not, proceeds from their pride. Infidelity regards nothing but what is present; and pride approves not of such a comforter, nay, reckons the life of those who seek his consolations to be madness, and their end to be without honour."

Peter Alphonsus, a Jew, was converted in the year 1106, in the forty-fourth year of his age. Being severely censured by his countrymen, he published a dialogue against the Jews, which seems to have been no contemptible defence of Christianity against his countrymen ‡. This man was eminent for sacred and profane literature, and it is hoped, became a real ornament to Christianity §. Peter Alphonsus, a Jew, converted, A. D. 1106.

Whoever in this degenerate age acted faithfully in the ministry, exposed himself to imminent danger. This was the case of Heinricus, bishop of Mentz. He was a rare pattern of meekness, integrity, and charity. But, through the unjust accusation of his clergy, he was deprived of his bishopric by the authority of two cardinals at Worms. "I know," said

* Cent. Magd. 23.
† Id. 98.
‡ Du Pin, 170.
§ Cent. Magd. 704.

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he, "if I were to appeal to the pope, it would be in vain. I appeal, therefore, to Jesus Christ, the just Judge of quick and dead, who neither accepts persons, nor receives bribes, as you do." After his expulsion from his See, which he had held near nine years, he retired to a monastery in Saxony, and lived in privacy and retirement, but without taking upon him the monastic habit, and died in 1153*.

Heinricus expelled from his bishopric at Mentz, dies in a monastery,

A. D. 1153.

Vicelinus, before mentioned, was born at an obscure town on the banks of the Weser, in the diocese of Minden. Having met with a sarcastic reproof from a priest, in his youth, on account of his indolence and ignorance, he was roused to pay the greatest attention to the cultivation of his understanding. Many in that age were equally studious; but Vicelinus was singularly eminent in directing his studies to practical purposes, and to the cultivation of genuine piety, and in avoiding the miserable strife of metaphysical subtilties, to which men of learning were then generally addicted. The scene of his evangelical labours was Holstein, in the kingdom of Denmark: there he taught men to turn from idols to the living God; for the Holsatians had known nothing of Christianity, but the name: they worshipped groves, fountains, and various vanities. The success of Vicelinus seems to have been solid and lasting; many pagans all around, and particularly the Vandals, were induced to receive Christianity. After he had laboured thirty years in Holstein and the neighbouring parts, he was appointed bishop of Oldenburgh in the year 1128. He still continued near six years in the same course of evangelical labour, in which he had persevered so long before, but was at length confined to his bed by a palsy for upwards of two years, and died in the year 1154†.

Vicelinus made bishop of Oldenburgh,

A. D. 1128.

Dies,

A. D. 1154.

Anselm of Havelburg was a bishop of some literary reputation, and flourished in the middle of this

* Cent. Magd. 710. † Id. 748.

century. The only thing, which I find remarkable concerning him, and it gives a strong presumption in favour of his piety or understanding, or both, is this, that he saw and censured the pharisaism of the monkish institutions. He declared, that there were many in his time, successively rising up, who disapproved of the vanity and novelty* of monastic orders. CENT. XII.

It may be proper just to mention Peter, abbot of Cluny, surnamed the venerable. That so ignorant and so trifling a writer should have been honoured with a title so magnificent, is one of the strongest marks of the low state of religious knowledge in general at that time. He takes large pains to vindicate the manners and customs of his monastery against objections; and in doing this he is so verbose and circumstantial†, that he may seem to have placed the essence of Christianity in frivolous punctilios and insignificant ceremonies. This is he, who received Peter Abelard in his afflictions with great humanity, and who consoled Eloisa after the death of that ingenious heretic, by sending to her, at her request, the form of Abelard's absolution‡, which that unhappy woman inscribed on his sepulchre. I can only say, in the praise of Peter, that his manners were gentle, his temper very mild and humane, and that he had what in common language is concisely called A GOOD HEART.

I add Peter Lombard to the list of eminent persons of this century, though I know nothing interesting to relate of him, further than what has already been mentioned. Subtilty of argumentation was his forte: I find no evidence of his genuine humility and piety.

Isidore of Madrid, a poor labourer of this century, was canonized by papal authority. The

* Cent. Magd. Cent. XII. 761.
† Du Pin, Cent. XII. p. 79. ‡ Baron. Cent. XII.

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account of him is too scanty, to enable us to form a proper estimate of his real worth and qualifications. There must, however, have been something singularly striking in his character; as here we have one canonization at least, which could not be the result of interested adulation. His master, John de Vargas, allowed him daily to attend the public offices of the Church; and he, by early rising, took care that the master lost nothing of his due services: he relieved the poor by the produce of his labours: he was humble, laborious, and just; and died near sixty years old, in the exercises of benevolence. What a Saint! if, as may be hoped, he was principled by the faith of Jesus, and, from the heart, renounced his own righteousness as filthy rags!

Isidore died at the age of 60.

CENTURY XIII.

CHAP. I.

PETER WALDO.

THE reader will recollect the account, which has been given of the Cathari*, who were evidently a people of God in the former part of the last century. In the latter part of the same century, they received a great accession of members from the learned labours and godly zeal of Peter Waldo. In the century before us, they were gloriously distinguished by a dreadful series of persecutions, and exhibited a spectacle to the world, both of the power of divine grace, and of the malice and enmity of the world against the real Gospel of Jesus Christ. I purpose to represent in one connected view, the history of this people to the time of the Reformation, and a little after. The spirit, doctrine and progress of the Waldenses, will be more clearly understood by this method, than by broken and interrupted details; and the thirteenth century seems the most proper place in which their story should be introduced. CENT. XIII.

The Cathari, whom Bernard so unhappily misrepresented, were peculiarly numerous in the vallies of Piedmont. Hence the name Vaudois or Vallenses was given to them, particularly to those who inhabited the vallies of Lucerne and Angrogne. A mistake arose from similarity of names, that Peter

* See pp. 378, &c.

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Valdo or Waldo, was the first founder of these Churches. For the name Vallenses being easily changed into Waldenses, the Romanists improved this very easy and natural mistake into an argument against the antiquity of these Churches, and denied that they had any existence till the appearance of Waldo. During the altercations of the papists and Protestants, it was of some consequence that this matter should be rightly stated; because the former denied that the doctrines of the latter had any existence till the days of Luther. But from a just account of the subject, it appeared that the real Protestant doctrines existed during the dark ages of the Church, even long before Waldo's time; the proper founder of them being Claudius of Turin, the Christian hero of the ninth century *.

The Court of Rome required the doctrine of Transubstantiation to be universally acknowledged, A. D. 1160.

About the year 1160, the doctrine of transubstantiation, which, some time afterwards, Innocent III. confirmed in a very solemn manner, was required by the court of Rome to be acknowledged by all men. A very pernicious practice of idolatry was connected with the reception of this doctrine. Men fell down before the consecrated host, and worshipped it as God: and the novelty, absurdity, and impiety of this abomination very much struck the minds of all men, who were not dead to a sense of

* Dr. Allix, in his history of the ancient Church of Piedmont, has done justice to this subject. I have already made use of his learned labours, and shall again avail myself of them; though my chief source of information concerning this people will be their history, written by John Paul Perrin of Lyons, who wrote in 1618. I could have wished, that his accounts of internal religion had been more full, even though those of the persecutions had been more scanty. But there arose no writers of eminence among the Waldenses; and Perrin's history is in a great measure collected from the records of the process and proceedings against the Waldensian Churches, which were in the offices of the archbishops of Ambrun, and which were very providentially preserved. I shall not quote him in any particular passage, because I make such large use of his history in general.

true religion. At this time Peter Waldo, a citizen of Lyons, appeared very courageous in opposing the innovation; though it is evident, from the very imperfect account which we have of him, that it was not one single circumstance alone which influenced him in his views of reformation. It was the fear of God, in general, as a ruling principle in his own soul, and an alarming sense of the wickedness of the times, which, under the divine influence, moved him to oppose with courage the dangerous corruptions of the Hierarchy. CENT. XIII.

A providential event had given the first occasion to this reformer's concern for religion. Being assembled with some of his friends, and after supper conversing and refreshing himself among them, one of the company fell down dead on the ground, to the amazement of all that were present. From that moment it pleased God that Waldo should commence a serious inquirer after divine truth. This person was an opulent merchant of Lyons, and as his concern of mind increased, and a door of usefulness to the souls of men was more and more set open before him, he abandoned his mercantile occupation, distributed his wealth to the poor, and exhorted his neighbours to seek the bread of life. The poor, who flocked to him, that they might partake of his alms, received from him the best instructions, which he was capable of communicating; and they reverenced the man, to whose liberality they were so much obliged, while the great and the rich both hated and despised him.

Waldo, himself, however, that he might teach others effectually, needed himself to be taught; and where was instruction to be found? Men at that day might run here and there for meat, and not be satisfied. In some convents, among the many who substituted formality for power, there were particular persons, who "held the HEAD," and drew holy nourishment from him. But a secular man, like

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Waldo, would not easily find them out, and were he to have met with some of them, their prejudiced attachments to the See of Rome would either have prevented them from imparting to him the food which was necessary for his soul, or have led him into a course of life, by which he would, after their example, have buried his talent in a napkin. The conduct of Bernard, one of the most eminent and best of them, too plainly shows that one of these two things would have been the case. But Bernard was gone to his rest not long before this time, and seems not to have left any monastic brother behind him at all to be compared with himself. Divine Providence reserved better things for Waldo: darkened and distressed in mind and conscience, he knew that the Scriptures were given as infallible guides, and he thirsted for those sources of instruction, which at that time were in a great measure a sealed book in the Christian world. To men who understood the Latin tongue, they were accessible. But how few were these, compared with the bulk of mankind! The Latin Vulgate Bible was the only edition of the sacred book at that time in Europe; and the languages then in common use, the French and others, however mixed with the Latin, were, properly speaking, by this time separate and distinct from it. It is a certain mark of the general negligence of the clergy in those ages, that no provision was made for the ignorant in this respect, though I do not find that there existed any penal law to forbid the reading of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue. It is certain that Waldo found means to diffuse the precious gift of the Scriptures among the people. But different accounts are given us of his manner of doing it*. His enemies assert, that some books of Scripture, having been translated from Latin into French, he assumed the office of an apostle to him-

* Usher de Christ. Eccl. success. & statu.

self. In particular, Reinerius says, "Being somewhat learned, he taught the people the text of the New Testament." This looks so like a reluctant confession of his learning and knowledge, that I am tempted to believe the words of Matthias Illyricus, who observes: "His kindness to the poor being diffused, his love of teaching, and their love of learning growing stronger and stronger, greater crowds came to him, and he explained the Scriptures. He was himself a man of learning, so I understand from some old parchments, nor was he obliged to employ others to translate for him, as his enemies affirm." Another anonymous author tells us, likewise, that Waldo made a collection in the vulgar tongue of the passages of the ancient fathers, that he might satisfy his disciples by the testimony of the doctors against their adversaries. CENT. XIII.

But whether Waldo himself entirely performed the work, or encouraged others to do it, or what is most probable, executed it himself with the assistance of others, it is certain, that the Christian world in the west was indebted to him for the first translation of the Bible into a modern tongue, since the time that the Latin had ceased to be a living language. A most valuable gift! True reformers have ever been remarkable for a desire and endeavour to communicate knowledge among the ignorant: and it is a standing reproach to the whole popish system, that however pious and scripturally judicious some individuals of that Church have been, no pains at all were taken by it to diffuse Biblical knowledge among the vulgar. The praise of this work, if we except the single instance of the Sclavonian version of the Scriptures, which, however, was executed by two Greek monks, and not by papists, is purely and exclusively of protestant origin in Europe, during all the ages preceding the Reformation.

As Waldo grew more acquainted with the Scriptures, he discovered, that the general practice of

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nominal Christians was totally abhorrent from the doctrines of the New Testament: and in particular, that a number of customs, which all the world regarded with reverence, had not only no foundation in the divine oracles, but were even condemned by them. Inflamed with equal zeal and charity, he boldly condemned the reigning vices, and the arrogance of the pope. He did more: as he himself grew in the knowledge of the true faith and love of Christ, he taught his neighbours the principles of practical godliness, and encouraged them to seek salvation by Jesus Christ.

John De Beles Mayons, the archbishop of Lyons, could not but be sensible of the tendency of these proceedings, and being jealous of the honour of the corrupt system, of which he was a distinguished member, he forbad the new reformer to teach any more, on pain of excommunication, and of being proceeded against as an heretic. Waldo replied, that though he was a layman, yet he could not be silent in a matter which concerned the salvation of men. On this reply, the archbishop endeavoured to apprehend him. But the great affection of Waldo's friends, the influence of his relations, who were men of rank, the universal regard paid to his probity and piety, and the conviction which, no doubt, many felt, that the extraordinary circumstances of the times justified his assumption of the pastoral character *, all these things operated so strongly in his favour,

* If Waldo's friends reasoned aright in this, as I am inclined to think they did, arguing from the necessity of the case, and the strength of that divine aphorism, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," let not, however, such extraordinary cases give a sanction to many self-created teachers, who disturb rather than strengthen the hands of faithful pastors by their irregular proceedings. See Butler's Analogy, p. 232. Oct. Edit. or p. 158. 4to. Edit. Our Lord himself has taken occasion to make the comparison between positive institutions and moral precepts; by delivering his authoritative determination in a proverbial manner of expression, has made it general; "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."

that he lived concealed at Lyons for the space of three years. CENT. XIII.

Among other scriptural discoveries, the evils of the popedom struck the mind of Waldo; and Pope Alexander III. having heard of his proceedings, anathematized the reformer and his adherents, and commanded the archbishop to proceed against them with the utmost rigour.

Waldo could no longer remain in Lyons. He escaped; his disciples followed him; and hence a dispersion took place, similar to that which arose in the primitive Church on occasion of the persecution of Stephen. The effects were also similar: the doctrine of Waldo was hence more widely disseminated through Europe. He himself retired into Dauphiny, where his tenets took a deep and lasting root. Some of his people did probably join themselves to the Vaudois of Piedmont, and the new translation of the Bible was, doubtless, a rich accession to the spiritual treasures of that people. Waldo himself, however, seems never to have been among them. Persecuted from place to place, he retired into Picardy. Success still attended his labours; and the doctrines which he preached appear to have so harmonized with those of the Vaudois, that with reason they and his people were henceforward considered as the same.

To support and encourage the Church of Christ formed no part of the glory of the greatest and wisest princes of that age. The barbarous conduct of our Henry II. has been already noticed; and Philip Augustus, one of the most prudent and sagacious princes whom France ever saw, was no less enslaved by the "god of this world*." He took up arms against the Waldenses of Picardy, pulled down three hundred houses of the gentlemen who supported their party, destroyed some walled towns,

* 2 Cor. iv. 4.

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and drove the inhabitants into Flanders. Not content with this, he pursued them thither, and caused many of them to be burned.

Waldo dies in Bohemia, A. D. 1179.

From the account of a very authentic French historian*, it appears, that Waldo fled into Germany, and at last settled in Bohemia. There he ended his days in the year 1179, or before that time†. It is evident, from good records, that the churches of Dauphiny corresponded with those of Bohemia, and that these last were, on some occasions at least, supplied with pastors from Piedmont. These things show the mutual connexion of the Waldensian Churches, and prove the superior antiquity of those of the Vallies, the severity of the persecution, and the important services of Peter Waldo. A very extraordinary personage! resembling, in many respects the immediate successors of the Apostles themselves! But his piety, endowments, and labours, have met with no historian capable of doing them justice; and, as in every light he had no reward upon earth, he appears to have been eminently one of those of whom the world was not worthy:

* Thuan. Hist. sui temp. 457.

† The account which Mosheim has given us of the Waldenses, is so very different from mine, that it may seem proper that I should assign the reasons, why I presume to differ from so learned an historian in matters of fact. 1st. I have adduced ample testimonies, and the reader who will consult Dr. Allix, may see more, to prove, that these persons existed before the time of Peter Waldo, and consequently, that he was not, as Mosheim asserts, the proper parent and founder of the sect. 2d. That his account of their insisting on the necessity of the poverty and manual labours of their pastors is a mistake, will appear from their own declarations in the next chapter. 3d. So far was Waldo from being the founder of the Churches of the Vallies, that it does not appear that he ever was in Piedmont at all. 4th. Mosheim asserts, that he assumed the pastoral function in 1180, but it is evident from Thuanus, that he died before that æra. On the whole, the information of Mosheim concerning this people seems very scanty, confused, and erroneous. See Mosheim, Vol. I. p. 615.

but he turned many to righteousness, and shall shine as the stars for ever and ever *. The word of God grew and multiplied in the places where he had planted, and even in still more distant regions. In Alsace and along the Rhine the Gospel was preached with a powerful effusion of the Holy Spirit; persecutions ensued, and thirty-five citizens of Mentz were burned at one fire in the city of Bingen, and at Mentz eighteen. The bishop of Mentz was very active in these persecutions, and the bishop of Strasburg was not inferior to him in vindictive zeal; for, through his means, eighty persons were burned at Strasburg. Every thing relating to the Waldenses resembled the scenes of the primitive Church. Numbers died praising God, and in confident assurance of a blessed resurrection; whence the blood of the martyrs again became the seed of the Church; and in Bulgaria, Croatia, Dalmatia, and Hungary, churches were planted, which flourished in the thirteenth century, governed by Bartholomew, a native of Carcassone, a city not far distant from Toulouse, which might be called in those days the metropolis of the Waldenses, on account of the numbers who there professed evangelical truth †. In Bohemia and in the country of Passaw, it has been computed that there were eighty thousand in the former part of the fourteenth century. Almost throughout Europe Waldenses were to be found; and yet they were treated as the off-scouring of the earth, and as people against whom all the power and wisdom of the world were united. But "the witnesses continued to prophesy in sackcloth ‡," and souls were built up in the faith, the hope, and the charity of the Gospel; and here was the faith and patience of the Saints.

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* Daniel xii. 3.
† Matthew Paris, in his Hist. of Henry III. Ann. 1223.
‡ Revelat. xi. 3.

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THE REAL CHARACTER OF THE WALDENSES.

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BUT we are justly called on, in this place, to vindicate the claim which this people made to the honourable character of the Church of God. In times of very great decline, whoever is led by the Spirit of God to revive true religion, necessarily exposes himself to the invidious charges of arrogance, uncharitableness, and self-conceit. By condemning all others, he provokes the rest of the world to observe and investigate his faults. These disadvantages the Waldenses had in common with other Reformers: they had also disadvantages peculiarly their own. Power, knowledge, and learning, were almost entirely in the hands of their adversaries: in them very particularly God Almighty chose the weak and foolish things of the world to confound the wise. As they were, for the most part, a plain and illiterate people, they furnished no learned divines, no profound reasoners, nor able historians. The vindication of their claims to the character of a true Church must therefore be drawn principally from the holiness of their lives and the patience of their sufferings. There are, however, besides these, certain documents respecting their principles, which will enable the candid and attentive reader to form a just estimate of these men.

Nothing can exceed the calumnies of their adversaries: in this respect they had the honour to bear the cross of the first christians. Poor men of Lyons, and Dogs, were the usual terms of derision. In Provence they were called cut-purses: In Italy, because they observed not the appointed festivals, and rested from their ordinary occupations only on Sundays, they were called Insabathas; that is,

regardless of sabbaths. In Germany, they were called Gazares, a term expressive of every thing flagitiously wicked. In Flanders, they were denominated Turlupins, that is, inhabitants with wolves, because they were often obliged to dwell in woods and deserts. And because they denied the consecrated Host to be God, they were accused of Arianism, as if they had denied the divinity of Jesus Christ. Our old historian, Hoveden, calls them Arians*. It was not possible for these poor sufferers to speak a word in defence or explanation of their doctrines, but malice, which discolours every thing, was sure to misrepresent it. If they maintained the independency of the temporal powers on the ecclesiastical, a doctrine now believed almost universally in Europe, they were called Manichees, as if they favoured the notion of two principles. So I find Baronius calls them, observing that they were rather Manichees than Arians†. The old odious name of Gnostic also was revived, with every other term of ancient or modern opprobrium, which might infix a stigma on the character of the sufferers, and seem to justify the barbarity with which they were treated. CENT. XIII.

Matthew Paris himself, one of the most valuable of the monkish historians, calls them Ribalds, or dissolute men. They were termed, and as numbers believed, not without justice, sorcerers, and even sodomites. It is surprising how the old calumnies, with which the pagans blackened the primitive Christians, were renewed, namely, that they met in the night, were guilty of incest, and the like. Reinerius, their adversary, as mentioned above, was not ashamed to repeat this absurd accusation. To which he adds, that they allowed divorces at pleasure, in order that the sectarians might live together entirely, and exclude all others from their society;

* Hoveden, p. 327. † Baron. Cent. XII. Ann. 1176.

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that they worshipped their pastors; and that they maintained as a principle, that no magistrate ought to condemn any person to death. But it were endless to recite calumnies of this kind: let us see how they cleared themselves by their own writings. An apology was still extant in the time of Perrin, which the Waldenses of Bohemia, sent to Ladislaus, king of Hungary and Bohemia, by whom they were grievously persecuted. From this, and some other of their writings, their conduct is defended.

In answer to the charge of lewdness, they strongly deny it, and gravely express their abhorrence of the sin. "This vice," say they, "consumes the estates of many, as it is said of the prodigal son, who wasted his substance in riotous living. Balaam made choice of this vice, to provoke the children of Israel to offend their God. Hence Samson lost his sight. Hence Solomon was perverted, and many have perished. The remedies for this sin are fasting, prayer, and the keeping at a distance from temptation. Other vices may be subdued by fighting; in this we conquer by flight." Let men of this refined age, who are enslaved by uncleanness, learn some good rules from the Waldenses, whose simplicity was mixed with true wisdom. The charge of admitting divorces at pleasure they abhor, and quote the Scripture* against the practice: "Let not the wife depart from her husband, nor the husband put away his wife." They published also a book, describing the causes of their separation from the Roman Church. The separation was at length indeed, through the violence of their persecutors, made complete; but as I have elsewhere observed, the desire of separating from the Latin Church did not commence with them. This people were injuriously represented also as holding the community of goods, and denying the right of all private

* 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.

property. Their answer to the charge was very satisfactory. "Every one of us hath possessed his own at all times and in all places. In Dauphiny and other parts, when we were dispossessed of our substance, the suits for the recovery of each estate were conducted by the particular proprietors *. The Waldenses of Provence do at this present time demand of the pope the restoration of the lands and estates annexed to his domain by confiscation; every particular person making oath of his parcel of goods and lands, which descended to him from time immemorial; for we never have had community of property in the sense objected to us by our adversaries." CENT. XIII.

Nothing is more common than to slander true Christians with aspersions, which tend to deprive them of all respectability in society, and to represent them as quite unfit for the ordinary purposes of human life. We have just seen a foul attempt of this nature formed against the Waldenses. To the same purport they were charged with denying the lawfulness of oaths in all cases without exception. This point of their history has its difficulties: what they really held on the doctrine of oaths is not very apparent from the account which Usher gives us †. Most probably they condemned the multiplicity of oaths, with which the courts of law abounded. That they did not, however, maintain the absolute unlawfulness of oaths is certain, from the exposition of the third commandment in their "spiritual almanack;" in which are these words; "There are some oaths lawful, tending to the honour of God, and the edification of our neighbour, as appears from Heb. vi. 16. Men swear by a greater, and

* This appears by the legal process, existing in Perrin's time, which shows that Lewis XII. condemned the usurpers of the goods of the Waldenses to a restitution. This happened about the beginning of the sixteenth century.

† Usher de Christ. Ecc. success. & statu.

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an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife." Other scriptures are alleged by them to the same purport. Men who held these things should be acquitted of the charge of universally denying the lawfulness of oaths. But it seems to have been one of the common artifices of the prince of darkness to calumniate the people of God in this manner. He knows, that if religious men be thought wholly unfitted for this world, because of certain absurd or ridiculous customs, the generality of mankind will pay no great regard to their instructions concerning the right way to the next. It is, therefore, of some consequence to clear up the character of true Christians in this respect.

Another charge against them was, that they denied baptism to infants. In answer to this, in their spiritual almanack, they say, "neither the time nor the place is appointed for those who must be baptized. But we do bring our children to be baptized; which they ought to do, to whom they are nearest related; their parents, or those whom God hath inspired with such charity." If this be the case,—and the evidence of their own books appears to be unanswerable,—it seems improper to look on the Waldenses as averse to infant-baptism. Yet, that some of them were regarded as professed enemies to the baptism of infants, is affirmed on respectable authority*, and it possibly might be the case with a few of them. The greater part of them are, however, vindicated in this respect by an authority from which lies no appeal, their own authentic writings. However, having been for some hundreds of years constrained to suffer their children to be baptized by the Romish priests, they were under frequent temptations to defer it, on account of the superstitious inventions annexed to that holy ordinance in those times: and very frequently on account of the absence of their own

* Cent. Magd. XII. 833.

pastors, whom they called Barbs, who were travelling abroad for the service of the Churches, they could not have baptism administered to their children by their ministry. The delay occasioned by these things exposed them to the reproach of their adversaries. And though many, who approved of them in all other respects, gave credit to the accusation, I cannot find any satisfactory proof, that they were, in judgment, antipædo-baptists strictly. And it is very probable that some of the supposed heretics, who have been mentioned above*, delayed the baptism of their children on the same account; because similar circumstances would naturally be attended with similar effects. On the whole, a few instances excepted, the existence of antipædobaptism seems scarcely to have taken place in the Church of Christ, till a little after the beginning of the Reformation, when a sect arose, whom historians commonly call the anabaptists. I lay no great stress on this subject; for the Waldenses might have been a faithful, humble, and spiritual people, as I believe they were, if they had differed from the general body of Christians on this article. But when I find persons accused as enemies to infant-baptism who were not so, it seems to be a part of historical veracity to represent things as they really were.

The charge of worshipping their Barbs is sufficiently confuted by their exposition of the first commandment in the book of their doctrine. Indeed Albert de Capitaneis, their grand enemy in the diocese of Turin, violently tortured them, in order to extort from them a confession of this idolatry, but to no purpose.

It was a gross calumny to censure them as inimical to the penal power of the magistrate, because they complained of the abuse of his power in condemning true Christians to death without a fair exami-

* See p. 389 of this Vol.

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nation; when, at the same time, in their own books, they asserted, that "a malefactor ought not to be suffered to live*."

No less unjust were the charges against them of seditiousness and undutifulness to the supreme power. For in the book of the causes of their separation from the Church of Rome, they said, that every one ought to be subject to those who are in authority, to obey and love them, to honour them with double honour, with subjection, allegiance, and promptitude, and the paying of tribute to whom tribute is due. The charges of sodomy, sorcery, and the like abominations, are sufficiently confuted by the authentic writings, holy lives, and patient sufferings of this people.

One charge more against them is, that they compelled their pastors to follow some trade. How satisfactory their answer! "We do not think it necessary that our pastors should work for bread. They might be better qualified to instruct us, if we could maintain them without their own labour; but our poverty has no remedy." So they speak in letters published in 1508†.

We have hitherto rather rescued their character from infamy, than delineated its real nature. They appear, on the whole, to have been most unjustly aspersed; and the reader will be enabled to form some idea of their piety and probity, from the following testimonies of their enemies:

A pontifical inquisitor‡ says, "heretics are known by their manners. In behaviour they are composed and modest, and no pride appears in their apparel." Seysillius says, it much strengthens the Waldenses, that, their heresy excepted, they generally live a purer life than other Christians. They never swear but by compulsion, and seldom take

* In a book of the Waldenses, called "The Light of the Treasure of Faith."

† Usher de Christ. Eccl. succ. & statu.

‡ Id.

the name of God in vain: they fulfil their promises with good faith; and, living for the most part in poverty, they profess that they at once preserve the apostolical life and doctrine. Lielenstenius, a Dominican, speaking of the Waldenses of Bohemia, says, "I say that in morals and life they are good; true in words, and unanimous in brotherly love; but their faith is incorrigible and vile, as I have shown in my treatise." CENT. XIII.

These testimonies, for which I am obliged to the researches of archbishop Usher, seem to me to be important. The first, as far as it goes, is favourable; and the second and third are exceedingly decisive. Causes and effects are necessarily connected. How could the Romanist last quoted suppose, that the faith of men could be bad whose fruits were so excellent? Could he show such fruits in the Roman Church in general at that time?

We have now seen the fullest testimony to the holiness of the Waldenses; and we shall see shortly that the doctrines which they held were no other than those, which, under the Divine influence, we have all along observed to be the constant root of virtue in the world.

Reinerius, the cruel persecutor, owns that the Waldenses frequently read the Holy Scriptures, and in their preaching cited the words of Christ and his apostles concerning love, humility, and other virtues; insomuch that the women, who heard them, were enraptured with the sound. He further says, that they taught men to live by the words of the Gospel and the Apostles; that they led religious lives; that their manners were seasoned with grace, and their words prudent; that they freely discoursed of divine things, that they might be esteemed good men. He observes, likewise, that they taught their children and families the Epistles and Gospels. Claude, bishop of Turin, wrote a treatise against their doctrines, in which he candidly owns that they

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themselves were blameless, without reproach among men, and that they observed the divine commands with all their might.

Jacob de Riberia says, that he had seen peasants among them, who could recite the book of Job by heart; and several others, who could perfectly repeat the whole New Testament.

The bishop of Cavaillon once obliged a preaching monk to enter into conference with them, that they might be convinced of their errors, and the effusion of blood be prevented. This happened during a great persecution in 1540, in Merindol and Provence. But the monk returned in confusion, owning that he had never known in his whole life so much of the Scriptures, as he had learned during those few days in which he had held conferences with the heretics. The bishop, however, sent among them a number of doctors, young men who had lately come from the Sorbonne, which was at that time the very centre of theological subtilty at Paris. One of them openly owned, that he had understood more of the doctrine of salvation from the answers of the little children in their catechism, than by all the disputations which he had ever heard. This is the testimony of Vesembecius in his oration concerning the Waldenses. The same author informs us further, that Lewis XII. importuned by the calumnies of informers, sent two respectable persons into Provence to make inquiries. They reported, that in visiting all their parishes and temples, they found no images or Roman ceremonies, but that they could not discover any marks of the crimes with which they were charged; that the sabbath was strictly observed; that children were baptized according to the rules of the primitive Church, and instructed in the articles of the Christian faith, and the commandments of God. Lewis having heard the report, declared with an oath, "they are better men than myself or my people." One of the confessors of the same king having, by his orders,

Great Persecution, A. D. 1540.

visited the valley of Fraissiniere in Dauphiny, was so struck with the holy lives of the people there, that he declared in the hearing of several competent witnesses, that he wished he himself were as good a Christian as the worst inhabitant in that valley. CENT. XIII.

We must add here the testimony of that great historian Thuanus, an enemy indeed to the Waldenses, though a fair and candid one*. He is describing one of the vallies inhabited by this people in Dauphiny, which is called the stony valley. "Their clothing," he says, "is of the skins of sheep;—they have no linen.—They inhabit seven villages: their houses are constructed of flint stone, with a flat roof covered with mud, which being spoiled or loosened by rain, they smooth again with a roller. In these they live with their cattle, separated from them, however, by a fence; they have besides two caves set apart for particular purposes, in one of which they conceal their cattle, in the other themselves, when hunted by their enemies. They live on milk and venison, being by constant practice excellent marksmen. Poor as they are, they are content, and live separate from the rest of mankind. One thing is astonishing, that persons externally so savage and rude, should have so much moral cultivation. They can all read and write. They understand French, so far as is needful for the understanding of the Bible and the singing of Psalms. You can scarcely find a boy among them who cannot give you an intelligible account of the faith which they profess; in this, indeed, they resemble their brethren of the other vallies: they pay tribute with a good conscience, and the obligation of this duty is peculiarly noted in the confession of their faith. If, by reason of the civil wars, they are prevented from doing this, they carefully set apart the sum, and at the first opportunity pay it to the king's tax-gatherers."

* Thuan. Hist. B. 27. p. 16.

CHAP. II. Francis I. the successor of Lewis XII. received, on inquiry, the following information concerning the Waldenses, of Merindol, and other neighbouring places; that they were a laborious people, who came from Piedmont to dwell in Provence, about two hundred years ago; that they had much improved the country by their industry; that their manners were most excellent; and that they were honest, liberal, hospitable, and humane; that they were distinct from others in this, that they could not bear the sound of blasphemy, or the naming of the devil, or any others, except on solemn occasions; and, that if ever they fell into company where blasphemy or lewdness formed the substance of the discourse, they instantly withdrew themselves.

Such are the testimonies to the character of this people from enemies!

That they are well spoken of by Protestants since the Reformation, might be expected; and I need not dwell largely upon evidences drawn from this source. Beza, Bullinger, and Luther, testify the excellence of the Waldenses. The last-mentioned Reformer deserves the more to be regarded, because he owns that he once was prejudiced against them. He understood by their confessions and writings that they had been, for ages, singularly serious and expert in the use of the Scriptures.—He rejoiced, and gave thanks to God, that he had enabled the reformed and the Waldenses to see and own each other as brethren*.

Œcolampadius and Martin Bucer also, in the year 1530, wrote an affectionate letter to the Waldenses of Provence.

After so many testimonies to the character of this people, the evidence of Vignaux, a Waldensian pastor in the vallies of Piedmont, who wrote a treatise on their life and manners, may deserve our

* Vesembecius.

attention. "We never mix ourselves," says he, "with the church of Rome in marriage. Yet Roman-catholic lords and others prefer our people as servants, to those of their own religion, and come from far to seek nurses among us for their children." CENT. XIII.

It is remarkable that Thomas Walden, who wrote against Wickliff, says, that the doctrine of Waldo was conveyed from France into England. It may not, perhaps, be thought improbable, that the English, being masters of Guienne for a long time, should have received some beams of divine truth from the followers of Waldo. By the general confession of the Romanists, indeed, the Protestants and the Waldenses were looked on as holding the same principles.

The churches of Piedmont, however, on account of their superior antiquity, were regarded as guides of the rest; insomuch, that when two pastors, who had been sent by them into Bohemia, acted with perfidy, and occasioned a grievous persecution, still the Bohemians ceased not to desire pastors from Piedmont; only they requested, that none but persons of tried characters might be sent to them for the future.

I can only give the general outlines: if the finer and more numerous lines of this scene could be circumstantially drawn, a spectacle more glorious could scarcely be exhibited to the reader. From the borders of Spain, throughout the south of France, for the most part, among and below the Alps, along the Rhine, on both sides of its course, and even to Bohemia, thousands of godly souls were seen patiently to bear persecution for the sake of Christ, against whom malice could say no evil, but what admits the most satisfactory refutation; men distinguished for every virtue, and only hated because of godliness itself. Persecutors with a sigh owned, that, because of their virtue, they were the

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most dangerous enemies of the Church. But of what Church? Of that, which in the thirteenth century and long before had evidenced itself to be Antichristian. Here were not an individual or two, like Bernard, but very many real Christians, who held the real doctrines of Scripture, and carefully abstained from all the idolatry of the times. How obdurate is the heart of man by nature! men could see and own the superior excellence of these persons, and yet could barbarously persecute them! What a blessed light is that of Scripture! By that the Waldenses saw the road to heaven, of which the wisest of their contemporaries were ignorant, who, though called Christians, made no use of the oracles of God! How marvellous are the ways of God! How faithful his promise in supporting and maintaining a Church, even in the darkest times! But her livery is often sackcloth, and her external bread is that of affliction, while she sojourns on earth. But let no factious partizan encourage himself in sedition by looking at the Waldenses. We have seen how obedient they were to established governments; and that separation from a Church, so corrupt as that of Rome, was with them only matter of necessity. The best and wisest in all ages have acted in the same manner, and have dreaded the evils of schism more than those of a defect in discipline. We shall now see what the Waldenses were in point of doctrine and discipline. For their virtues had an evangelical principle, and it is only to be regretted that the accounts are so very scanty on a subject worthy the attention of all who desire to understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.

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THE DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE OF THE WALDENSES.

THE leading principle of this Church, which God raised up in the dark ages to bear witness to his Gospel, is that, in which all the Protestant Churches agreed, namely, "that we ought to believe that the Holy Scriptures alone contain all things necessary to our salvation, and that nothing ought to be received as an article of faith but what God hath revealed to us*." Wherever this principle is not only assented to in form, but also received with the heart, it expels superstition and idolatry. The worship of one God, through the one Mediator, and by the influence of one Holy Spirit, is practised sincerely. For the dreams of purgatory, the intercession of saints, the adoration of images, dependence on relics and austerities, cannot stand before the doctrine of Scripture. Salvation by grace, through faith in Christ alone, as it is the peculiar truth and glory of the Scriptures, so it is the boast and joy of the Christian, who knows himself to be that guilty polluted creature which the same Scriptures describe. How abominable to such a one is the doctrine of indulgencies, and of commutation for offences, and the whole structure of the papal domination! The true love of God and of our neighbour, even the true holiness, which is the great end and aim of Christ's redemption, must be subverted by these human inventions. The Waldenses were faithful to the great fundamental principle of Protestantism. Enough appears on record to prove, that they were formed by the grace of

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* Vignaux in his memorials of the Waldenses. See this principle expressed in a similar manner in the sixth Article of the Church of England.

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God to show forth his praise in the world; and great as the resemblance appears between them and the reformed, if we had as many writings of the former, as we have of the latter, the resemblance in all probability would appear still more striking.

"They* affirm, that there is only one Mediator, and therefore that we must not invocate the Saints."

"That there is no purgatory; but that all those who are justified by Christ go into life eternal."

"They receive two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They affirm, that all masses are damnable, especially those which are repeated for the dead, and that therefore they ought to be abolished; to which they add the rejection of numberless ceremonies. They deny the supremacy of the pope, especially the power which he hath usurped over the civil government; and they admit no other degrees, except those of bishops, priests, and deacons. They condemn the popedom as the true Babylon, allow the marriage of the clergy, and define the true Church to be those who hear and understand the word of God."

Vignaux mentions old manuscripts extant among the Waldenses, containing catechisms and sermons, which demonstrate with what superior light they were favoured, in a time of immense darkness. A number of their old treatises evince, that for some hundreds of years the principles of the Gospel, which alone can produce such holiness of life as the Waldenses exhibited in their conduct, were professed, understood, and embraced by this chosen people, while Antichrist was in the very height of his power.

They appear to have had all the essentials of Church-discipline among them; and their circumstances of distress, of poverty, and of persecution,

* Vignaux.

however disagreeable to flesh and blood, favoured that spirit of submission and subordination, which ever promotes a salutary exercise of discipline; through the want of which, among ourselves, Church-rules are too commonly treated as insignificant. A state of refinement, of wealth, of luxury, and of political speculation, was unknown to the Waldenses: how subversive such a state is of the most wholesome ecclesiastical authority, the experience of our own age demonstrates. CENT. XIII.

In a book concerning their pastors we have this account of their vocation:

"All, who are to be ordained as pastors among us, while they are yet at home, entreat us to receive them into the ministry, and desire that we would pray to God, that they may be rendered capable of so great a charge. They are to learn by heart all the chapters of St. Matthew and St. John, all the canonical epistles, and a good part of the writings of Solomon, David, and the prophets. Afterwards, having exhibited proper testimonials of their learning and conversation, they are admitted as pastors by the imposition of hands. The junior pastors must do nothing without the license of their seniors; nor are the seniors to undertake any thing without the approbation of their colleagues, that every thing may be done among us in order. We pastors meet together once every year, to settle our affairs in a general synod. Those whom we teach afford us food and raiment with good-will, and without compulsion. The money given us by the people is carried to the said general synod, is there received by the elders, and applied partly to the supply of travellers, and partly to the relief of the indigent. If a pastor among us shall fall into a gross sin, he is ejected from the community, and debarred from the function of preaching."

Such was the manner of choosing the Barbs, and such was the plan of Church-government.

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To transcribe their confessions of faith would be tedious; let it suffice to mention the most interesting points. They unquestionably received the Apostles Creed, and that commonly ascribed to Athanasius. They acknowledged the same canon of Scripture, which the Church of England does in her sixth Article; and, what is very remarkable, they give the same account of the Apocryphal books, accompanied with the same remark of Jerom, which the reader will find in the same sixth Article. They say, "these books teach us, that there is one God, Almighty, wise and good, who in his goodness made all things. He created Adam after his own image. But through the malice of the devil, and the disobedience of Adam, sin entered into the world, and we became sinners in and by Adam. That Christ is our life and truth, and peace, and righteousness, our shepherd and advocate, our sacrifice and priest, who died for the salvation of all who should believe, and also rose again for our justification."

The confession of the Bohemian Waldenses, published in the former part of the sixteenth century, is very explicit on these articles. They say, that men ought to acknowledge themselves born in sin, and to be burdened with the weight of sin; that they ought to acknowledge, that for this depravity, and for the sins springing up from this root of bitterness, utter perdition deservedly hangs over their heads, and that all should own that they can no way justify themselves by any works or endeavours, nor have any thing to trust to but Christ alone. They hold, that by faith in Christ, men are, through mercy, freely justified, and attain salvation by Christ, without human help or merit. They hold, that all confidence is to be fixed in him alone, and all our care to be cast upon him; and, that for his sake only God is pacified, and adopts us to be his children. They teach also, that no man can have this faith by his own power, will or pleasure; that it is the gift of God,

who, where it pleaseth him, worketh it in man by his Spirit*. They teach also the doctrine of good works as fruits and evidences of a lively faith, much in the same manner as the Church of England does in her twelfth Article, and more largely in her homilies†. CENT. XIII.

The Waldenses in general express their firm belief, that there is no other Mediator than Jesus Christ: they speak with great respect of the Virgin Mary, as holy, humble, and full of grace; at the same time that they totally discountenance that senseless and extravagant admiration, in which she had been held for ages. They assert, that all, who have been and shall be saved, have been elected of God before the foundation of the world; and that whosoever upholds free-will, absolutely denies predestination and the grace of God‡. I use their own term free-will, not that I think it strictly proper. But what they meant by an upholder of free-will, is not hard to be understood, namely, one, who maintains that there are resources in the nature of man sufficient to enable him to live to God as he ought, without any need of the renewal of his nature by divine grace.

"We honour," say they, "the secular powers with subjection, obedience, promptitude, and payment of tribute." On this subject they are repeatedly explicit, and mention the example of our Lord, "who refused not to pay tribute, not taking upon himself any jurisdiction of temporal power."

They give a practical view of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, perfectly agreeable to the faith of the orthodox in all ages. Let it suffice to mention what they say of the Holy Ghost. "We believe, that he is our Comforter, proceeding from the Father and from the Son; by whose INSPIRATION we pray, being RENEWED by him WHO FORMETH all good

* Morland, p. 48. † Id. 49. ‡ Id. p. 40.

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works within us, and by him we have knowledge of all truth." Of the nature and use of the sacraments, they speak the common language of the Protestant Churches. The difference, indeed, between real good men in all ages, even in point of sentiment, on fundamental questions, is much smaller than what many believe. Trifling differences have been exceedingly magnified, partly through ignorance, and partly through malevolence. Through the course of this history the uniformity of faith, of inward experience, and of external practice, has appeared in the different ages of the Church. For it is the SAME GOD WHO WORKETH ALL IN ALL in his real Saints.

It is remarkable that an ancient confession of faith, copied out of certain manuscripts bearing date 1120, that is forty years before Peter Waldo, contains the same articles in substance, and in many particulars in the same words, as those, an abridgment of which has been given, and which were approved of in the sixteenth century. The conclusion from this fact is, that though Waldo was a most considerable benefactor to the Waldensian Churches by his translation of the Scriptures, his other writings, his preaching, and his sufferings, he was not properly their founder. Their plan of doctrine and Church-establishment, particularly in Piedmont, was of prior date, nor can any other account of the existence and light of a Church so pure and sound, in ages so remarkably corrupt, be given than this, that the labours of Claudius of Turin in the ninth century had, under God, produced these effects. Men, who spend and are spent for the glory of God, and for the profit of souls, have no conception of the importance of their efforts. While the schemes and toils of an ambitious conqueror, or an intriguing politician, which, at the time, fill the world with admiration, often vanish like smoke, the humble and patient labours of a

minister of Christ, though, during his own life, derided and despised by the great ones of the earth, remain in durable effects to succeeding generations, and emancipate thousands from the dominion of sin and Satan. God will work, AND WHO SHALL LET IT? In one article, indeed, these professors of pure religion seem to have carried their zeal beyond the bounds of Christian discretion. "We have," say they, "always accounted as unspeakable abominations before God, all those inventions of men, namely, the feasts and the vigils of the Saints." To these they add the idolatrous corruptions of the popedom. They either did not know, or did not consider, that the anniversaries of the martyrdoms of primitive Saints were of very high antiquity, and were observed in the purest times, even in the second century. As they were at that time observed, they seem not to have had any superstitious alloy, and might be productive of the best consequences, much less do they deserve the title of "unspeakable abominations." But the adoration and canonization of Saints, with other practices, which deserve the name of abominations, being incorporated with these festivals, in the twelfth and some preceding centuries, naturally account for the zealous and unreasonable indignation of these reformers. CENT. XIII.

The ancient catechism for the instruction of their youth, contains the same vital truths in substance, which form the catechisms of Protestant Churches. I shall mention two or three particulars, which are most strikingly peculiar.

"Q. Wherein consists your salvation?

ANS. In three substantial virtues, which do necessarily belong to salvation.

Q. How can you prove that?

ANS. The Apostle writes, 1 Cor. xiii, now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three.

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Q. What is faith?

ANS. According to the Apostle, Heb. xi. 1, it is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Q. How many sorts of faith are there?

ANS. There are two sorts, a living and a dead faith.

Q. What is a living faith?

ANS. It is that which works by love.

Q. What is a dead faith?

ANS. According to St. James, that faith, which is without works, is dead. Again, faith is nothing without works. Or, a dead faith is to believe that there is a God, and to believe those things which relate to God, and not believe IN him."

This last clause seems happily descriptive of the point. To believe in Christ is by himself, in John vi, illustrated by coming to him or trusting in him, being an exercise of heart toward Christ, which always works by love. Whereas a bare unoperative assent to certain doctrinal truths implies no reception of Christ in the heart, though it is all that thousands look on as necessary to constitute a genuine believer. That the composers of this catechism had in view this important distinction between speculatively believing a person to exist, and cordially believing IN that person, appears from another question and answer.

"Q. Dost thou believe in the Holy Catholic Church?

ANS. No; for it is a creature; but I believe that there is one."

They then proceed to show that the real Church consists "of the elect of God from the beginning to the end of the world, by the grace of God, through the merit of Christ, gathered together by the Holy Spirit, and fore-ordained to eternal life."

The Waldensian Confession had also an exposition of the Apostles Creed, the ten Commandments,

the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments. So remarkably has the Spirit of God, in all ages, led the real Church in a similar manner, to provide for the instruction of her children, by comments on the most necessary fundamentals! The Protestant Churches, in their original construction, all followed the same plan. An excess of ceremonies, and a burdensome round of superstitions, filled all the dominions of the papacy, while here and there an inventive genius, like Peter Abelard, endeavoured to swell the minds of men by philosophical refinements. In the mean time the genuine Christians were feeding on the bread of life, which was supplied by the Divine Word, and was communicated through the medium of catechetical and expository tracts, adapted to the plainest understandings. At this day true Christians are employed in the same manner; and a diligent observer may distinguish them from those of the superstitious or the self-sufficient cast. In our times, indeed, there does appear one remarkable difference of circumstances from the state of religion in the thirteenth century, namely, that the self-sufficient sceptical spirit predominates extremely above the superstitious.

I have examined the Waldensian expositions, which, together with the Scripture-proofs annexed to them, must at that day have formed a very salutary body of instruction. But the numerous modern treatises which are extant on the same subjects, render it superfluous for me to give them in detail. A few of the most striking thoughts shall be mentioned.

It deserves to be noticed, that in their exposition of the Apostles Creed, the Waldensian reformers give us the well-known text in 1 John, v. 7, as a proof of the doctrine of the Trinity. They were, it seems, perfectly satisfied of its authenticity, and most probably at that time had never heard of any suggestions to the contrary.

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"The Son of God, by the commandment of God the Father, and by his own free-will, was lifted up upon the altar of the cross, and was crucified, and hath redeemed mankind with his own blood; which work being accomplished, he arose from the dead the third day, having diffused through the world a light everlasting, like a new sun; that is, the glory of the resurrection, and of a heavenly inheritance, which the Son of God hath promised to give to all those who serve him in faith."

Hear, in a few instances, how in common with all evangelical expositors, they understand the spiritual meaning of the commandments. For "the first degree to salvation is the knowledge of sin; and therefore, acknowledging our fault, we approach with confidence to the throne of grace, and confess our sins."

"All that love the creature more than the Creator, observe not the first commandment. If a man shall say, I cannot tell, whether I have a greater love to God, or to that, which he forbids me to love, let him know that what a man loves least, in a case of necessity, is that which he is most willing to lose, and that which he loves the most, he preserves. Men cast their merchandise into the sea, to preserve their lives; which shows that they love life more than property. By such rules thou mayest try, whether thou lovest God more than all persons and things besides, or, whether thou art an idolater."

On the second commandment they are soundly argumentative and judiciously exact, because of the abominations with which they were surrounded, and with which all Europe was infected, except themselves.

"In the third commandment we are forbidden to swear falsely, vainly, or by custom. An oath acknowledgeth that God knows the truth, and it confirmeth a thing that is doubtful: it is an act of

divine service, and therefore they, who swear by the elements, do sin."

"Those who will observe the sabbath of Christians, that is, who will sanctify the day of the Lord, must be careful of four things: 1st. to cease from earthly and worldly labours; 2d. to abstain from sin; 3d. not to be slothful in regard of good works; and 4th. to do those things which are for the good of the soul." They support their assertion by the case of the sabbath-breaker in the book of Numbers, who was stoned to death.

In the rest of the commandments, they extend the meaning to the desires of the heart, and vindicate their interpretation by the well-known passages in our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. How could serious persons, who thus see the spirituality of the law, ever find rest to their consciences but in the blood of Christ? How common is it for self-righteous persons on the other hand to curtail the demands of the law, and make light of sin, that they may justify themselves!

On the Lord's Prayer, in a very sensible introduction, they observe, that "God, who seeth the secrets of our hearts, is more moved by a deep groan or sigh, with complaints and tears that come from the heart, than by a thousand words." In opposition to the formal rounds of repetition at that time so fashionable, they say, "there is no man, who can keep his mind attentive to prayer a whole day or a whole night together, except God give the special assistance of his grace. God hath therefore appointed to his servants other exercises, sometimes in one way, sometimes in another, which are to be performed for the good of themselves or of their neighbours, with their hearts lifted up to God." "To pray much is to be fervent in prayer." "No prayer can be pleasing to God, which refers not some way or other to the Lord's Prayer. Every

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Christian ought to apply himself to understand and learn it."

There is among the records of this people a very ancient confession of sin, which was commonly used, and which shows that they taught every person to apply to himself that hideous picture of human depravity which St. Paul delineates*, "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." If no more could be said for this people, than that they hated the gross abominations of popery, and condemned the vices of the generality of mankind, they might have been ostentatious Pharisees, or self-sufficient Socinians. But though, no doubt, there were unsound professors among them as among all other bodies of Christians, yet, in their community, there were a number of real Christians, who knew how to direct the edge of their severity against the "sins that dwelled in them," and who, being truly humbled under a piercing sight of native depravity, betook themselves wholly to the grace of God in Christ for salvation. Hear how they speak: "Excuse myself I cannot; for thou, O Lord, hast showed me both what is good and evil. I have understood thy power; I have not been ignorant of thy wisdom; I have known thy justice; and have tasted of thy goodness. Yet all the evil which I do proceeds from my own depravity. I have committed many evils from the beginning of my life; covetousness is rooted in my heart; I love riches, I seek after applause, and bear little love to those who have obliged me by their kindness. If thou do not pardon me, my soul must go down to perdition. Anger likewise reigns in my heart, and envy gnaws me; for I am naturally without charity. I am slow to do good, but industrious to do evil. I have blinded myself, and

* Rom. iii. 10—20.

have had many evil thoughts against thee. I have cast mine eyes on vain delights, and have seldom lifted them up to thy face. I have lent an ear to empty sounds, and to many evil speakings; but to hear and understand thy laws hath been grievous and irksome to me. I have taken more pleasure in the noisome sink of sin, than in divine sweetness; I have even worshipped sin; I have endeavoured in conceal my own guilt, and to lay it upon another. My mind and body are wounded; my heart hath been delighted with evil things; with many foolish and unprofitable objects. I have turned aside into by-paths, and, by my levity, have given an ill example to others. I have slandered my neighbour, and have loved him only because of my temporal interest." CENT. XIII.

There is not, in any age, a truly humble and serious Christian, who will not acknowledge himself guilty in all these respects before God, even though his conduct has, comparatively speaking, been blameless before men. It is the want of self knowledge which keeps men ignorant of their ill desert before God; and, in truth, nothing is so much unknown to men in general as the propensity of their own hearts. This knowledge, however, was found among the Waldenses; and hence they were a humble people, prepared to receive the Gospel of Christ from the heart, to walk in his steps, to carry his cross, and to fear sin above all other evils.

Some ancient inquisitorial memoirs, describing the manners and customs of this people, speak to this effect: "kneeling on their knees, they continue in prayers with silence, so long as a man may say thirty or forty Pater-nosters. This they do daily with great reverence, when they have no strangers with them, both before dinner and after; likewise before supper and after, and when they retire to rest, and in the morning. Before they go to meat,

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the elder among them, says, God, who blessed the five barley loaves and two fishes before his disciples in the wilderness, bless this table and that which is set upon it, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And after meat he says, The God which has given us bodily food, grant us his spiritual life, and may God be with us, and we always with him. After their meals they teach and exhort one another."

Reinerius, their adversary, declares, "that a certain Waldensian heretic, with a view of turning a person from the Catholic faith, swam over a river in the night and in the winter, to come to him and teach him the novel doctrines."

Hear what a character an ancient inquisitor gives of this people: "The heretics are known by their manners and words; for they are orderly and modest in their manners and behaviour. They avoid all appearance of pride in their dress, they neither wear rich clothes, nor are they too mean and ragged in their attire. They avoid commerce, that they may be free from falsehood and deceit: they live by manual industry, as day-labourers or mechanics; and their preachers are weavers and taylors. They seek not to amass wealth, but are content with the necessaries of life. They are chaste, temperate, and sober; they abstain from anger. They hypocritically go to the Church, confess, communicate, and hear sermons, to catch the preacher in his words. Their women are modest, avoid slander, foolish jesting, and levity of words, especially falsehood and oaths*."

Their directions to pastors in visiting the sick are full of evangelical simplicity. The afflicted person is exhorted to look to Christ as the great pattern of patient sufferers, "who is the true son of God, and yet hath been more afflicted than we all, and more

* Allix, p. 295.

tormented than any other.—Let the sick man consider with himself, that he is grievously afflicted as his Saviour was, when he suffered for us; for which thanks should be returned to God, because it hath pleased him to give this good Saviour to death for us, and at the same time mercy should be implored at his hands in the name of Jesus. And we Christians ought to have a perfect confidence and assurance, that our Father will forgive us for his goodness sake. Let the sick person commit himself wholly to the Lord. Let him do to his neighbour, as he would have his neighbour do to him, making such arrangements among his relations, that he may leave them in peace, and that there may be no suits or contentions after his death. Let him hope for salvation in Jesus Christ, and not in any other, or by any other thing, acknowledging himself a miserable sinner, that he may ask mercy of God, finding himself in such a manner culpable, that of himself he deserveth eternal death. If the pastor find the sick person alarmed and terrified with a sense of the divine displeasure against sinners, let him remind the distressed soul of those comfortable promises which our Saviour hath made to all those, who come to him, and who from the bottom of their heart, call upon him; and how God the Father hath promised forgiveness, whensoever we shall ask it in the name of his Son. These are the things, in which the true preacher of the Word ought faithfully to employ himself, that he may conduct the party visited to his Saviour."

"And whereas, in former times, it hath been the custom to cause the disconsolate widow to spend much money on singers and ringers, and on persons who eat and drink, while she weeps and fasts, wronging her fatherless children; it is our duty, from motives of compassion, to the end that one loss be not added to another, to aid them with our counsel and our goods, according to the ability

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which God hath bestowed on us, taking care that the children be well instructed, that they may labour to maintain themselves, as God hath ordained, and live like Christians."

The directions, which they gave to new converts, were, to study the epistolary instructions of St. Paul, that they might know how to walk in such a manner as not to give occasion of falling to their neighbours, and that they might not make the house of the Lord a den of thieves.

They were zealous in directing the education of children. "Despair not," say they, "of thy child, when he is unwilling to receive correction, or if he prove not speedily good; for the labourer gathereth not the fruits of the earth, as soon as the seed is sown, but he waits till the due season. A man ought to have a careful eye over his daughters. Keep them within, and see they wander not. For Dinah the daughter of Jacob was corrupted by being seen of strangers."

In ecclesiastical correction, they were directed by our Lord's rule, in first reproving a brother in private; secondly, in the presence of two or three brethren; and last of all, and not till other methods failed, in proceeding to excommunication. Private correction, they observe, is sufficient for faults not made known to many; but in the case of open sins, they followed the apostolical rule, * Them, that sin, rebuke before all, that others may fear. "Marriages are to be made according to the degrees of kindred permitted by God. The pope's dispensations are of no value, nor deserve the least regard. The band of holy matrimony must not be made without the consent of the parents of both parties; for children belong to their parents."

Against the disorders of taverns, and the mischiefs of dancing, they are exceedingly severe. Re-

* 1 Tim. v. 20.

mark one sentence; "They, who deck and adorn their daughters, are like those who put dry wood to the fire, to the end that it may burn the better. A tavern is the fountain of sin, and the school of Satan." For conversing with those, that are without, they give rules full of Christian simplicity; and they direct their people also in Christian morals after a style and manner much superior to the spirit and taste of the thirteenth century*.

It may be proper to observe here, that Sir Samuel Morland, in his history of the evangelical Churches of the vallies of Piedmont, bears the strongest testimony to the truth of Perrin's narrative. He gives us the attestation of Tronchin, the chief minister of Geneva, which attestation, he tells us, is, together with other original papers, in the public library of the University of Cambridge. The substance of the attestation itself is, that Tronchin declares that Perrin, coming to Geneva to print his history, communicated to him his work, and divers original manuscripts, from which he (Perrin) had extracted the ancient doctrine and discipline of the Waldenses, which manuscripts Tronchin then saw and perused. Tronchin's testimony is dated in 1656. We have here the united testimony of Perrin, Tronchin, and Morland, to the authenticity of the history before us. And it appears that the same Tronchin, at the distance of thirty-eight years, corresponded both with Perrin and Morland, There is also a book concerning Antichrist in an old manuscript, which contains many sermons of the pastors; it is dated 1120, and therefore was written before the time of Waldo. The existence, therefore, of these Churches is still further proved to have taken place before the days of that reformer. The treatise concerning Antichrist was preserved by the Waldenses of the Alps; and a brief summary of it is as follows:

* Morland, p. 86.

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"He is called Antichrist, because, being covered and adorned under the colour of Christ and his Church, he opposes the salvation purchased by Christ, of which the faithful are partakers by faith, hope, and charity. He contradicts the truth by the wisdom of the world, and by counterfeit holiness. To make up a complete system of religious hypocrisy, all these things must concur; there must be worldly-wise men, there must be religious orders, pharisees, ministers, doctors, the secular power, and lovers of this world. Antichrist, indeed, was conceived in the Apostles times, but he was in his infancy, unformed and imperfect. He was therefore the more easily known and ejected, being rude, raw, and wanting utterance. He had then no skill in making decretals, he wanted hypocritical ministers, and the show of religious orders. He had none of those riches, by which he might allure ministers to his service, and multiply his adherents: he wanted also the secular power, and could not compel men to serve him. But he grew to a full age, when the lovers of the world, both in Church and State, did multiply and get all the power into their hands: Christ had never any enemy like to this, so able to pervert the way of truth into falsehood, insomuch that the Church with her true children is trodden under foot. He robs Christ of his merits, of justification, regeneration, sanctification, and spiritual nourishment, and ascribes the same to his own authority, to a form of words, to his own works, to saints, and to the fire of purgatory. Yet he has some decent qualities, which throw a veil over his enormities; such as an external profession of Christianity, tradition, and catalogues of episcopal succession, lying wonders, external sanctity, and certain sayings of Christ himself, the administration of the sacraments, verbal preaching against vices, and the virtuous lives of some who really live to God in Babylon, whom, however, Antichrist, so

far as in him lies, prevents from placing all their hope in Christ alone. These things are a cloak, with which Antichrist hides his wickedness, that he may not be rejected as a pagan. Knowing these things, we depart from Antichrist, according to express Scriptural directions. We unite ourselves to the truth of Christ and his spouse, how small soever she appear. We describe the causes of our separation* from Antichrist, that if the Lord be pleased to impart the knowledge of the same truth to others, those, who receive it, together with us, may love it. But if they be not sufficiently enlightened, they may receive help by our ministry, and be washed by the Spirit. If any one have received more abundantly than we ourselves, we desire the more humbly to be taught, and to amend our defects.—A various and endless idolatry marks the genius of Antichrist, and he teaches men by that to seek for grace, which is essentially in God alone, exists meritoriously in

* Hence it appears, that, in 1120, there were a body of the Waldenses, who had perfectly separated from the Roman Church. Yet, it is evident from Bernard's account, that those, of whom he had some knowledge, were not separatists. This may be one instance of their differences among themselves, of which Evervinus speaks. And it is very conceivable, that men equally sincere, might not be, for a time, unanimous in this point. The dread of schism on the one hand, and of idolatrous contagion on the other, would afford no contemptible argument on both sides of the question. The Albigenses, however, a branch of the Waldenses, in the year 1200, were so exceedingly numerous, that they then formed a distinct Church, and were openly separated from the whole Romish system. In truth, though it seems to have been the fault of some Protestant historians to give too early a date to the reign of Antichrist, and, on that account, to condemn unjustly several Romish pastors, whom I have attempted to vindicate, yet the man of sin doubtless did appear, at length, in all that enormity which the most vehement of the Protestant writers have described. Therefore it became absolutely necessary for real Christians to depart from Babylon. The several bodies of the Waldenses did so, though, I think, successively and gradually.—They are properly the first of the Protestant Churches.

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Christ, and is communicated by faith alone through the Holy Spirit." They then proceed to confute distinctly the various abominations of popery, on which points it is, at this day, unnecessary to enlarge. Suffice it to say, that to see and argue as they did in that dark age, required a wonderful light, and strength of judgment. It is more to my purpose to mention some testimonies of the offices of Christ, which are interwoven in their arguments. "He is our advocate: he forgives sins. He presents himself in some measure to us, before we bestir ourselves. He knocks, that we may open to him: and, to obstruct all occasions of idolatry, he sits at the right hand of the Father in Heaven, and desires that every faithful soul should have recourse to his Redeemer alone. For all the care of the faithful should be directed toward Christ, imitating him that is above. He is the gate: whosoever entereth by him shall be saved. He alone hath the prerogative to obtain whatever he requests in behalf of mankind, whom he hath reconciled by his death. To what purpose should we address ourselves to any other Saint as mediator, seeing he himself is far more charitable and far more ready to succour us than any of them?"

There is also a short treatise on tribulation, a subject highly needful to be studied by all Christians, by those more particularly, who, like the Waldenses, live in the flames of persecution.

The Noble Lesson, written in the year 1100, has already, in part, been given to the reader*, and it closes the account of Waldensian monuments, collected by Perry of Lyons.

Some of the thoughts, which I have transcribed from this author, on account of their extreme simplicity, may appear almost childish to persons, whose taste has been formed purely by modern

* See p. 388.

models and maxims; and it must be confessed that we discover no person of superior capacity or uncommon genius among this people. Their means of knowledge were ordinary, their situation confined, and their circumstances perhaps universally poor. Even so FATHER, FOR SO IT SEEMED GOOD IN THY SIGHT*. The excellency of the power was therefore of God and not of man. How happened it, that they should possess so sound a portion of evangelical truth, so ably and judiciously confute established errors, so boldly maintain the truth as it is in Jesus, so patiently suffer for it, live so singularly distinct from the world, and so nobly superior to all around them; while princes, dignitaries, universities, and all that was looked on as great, splendid, and wise among men, wandered in miserable darkness? It was of the Lord, who is wonderful in council and excellent in work; and his preservation of a godly seed in the earth, in such circumstances, is a pledge that he never will forsake his Church, and that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. CENT. XIII.

We have seen the most satisfactory proofs of the genuine apostolical doctrine, connected with holy practice by the influence of the Holy Spirit, as subsisting among this people. At the Reformation, some fundamental doctrines, particularly that of original sin, and of justification by faith in Christ, were indeed more distinctly and explicitly unfolded. But every candid and intelligent reader has seen that these, with all other fundamental truths, were understood and confessed by the Waldenses. The principal defect of these records is, that invectives against Antichrist and its abominations make up too great a proportion of their catechetical instructions; and the general vital truths of the Gospel are not so much enlarged on as the reader, who seeks

* Luke x. 21.

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edification, would wish. How far this defect might be less obvious, or even disappear, could we see the many sermons of their pastors, I know not. But these Churches were in perpetual trouble and danger; and their distressed circumstances form, in some measure, an apology for the imperfection of their writings.

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THE PERSECUTIONS OF THE WALDENSES.

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THIS is the only subject relating to the Waldenses, which has not passed under our review. Their external history is indeed, little else than a series of persecution. And I regret, that while we have some large and distinct details of the cruelties of their persecutors, we have very scanty accounts of the spirit with which they suffered; and still less of the internal exercises of holiness, which are known only to the people of God. But this is not the first occasion which we have had to lament, concerning the manner in which Church-history has been transmitted to us.

Remarkable humiliation of our Henry II. and of Lewis VII. of France, A. D. 1162.

In 1162, two years after Waldo had begun to preach the Gospel in Lyons, Lewis VII. of France, and Henry II. of England, on foot, holding the bridle of the horse of Pope Alexander VII. walking one on one side of him, the other on the other, conducted him to his habitation; exhibiting, says Baronius*, a spectacle most grateful to God, to angels, and to men! The princes of the earth, as well as the meanest persons, were now enslaved to the popedom, and were easily led to persecute the children of God with the most savage barbarity. We

* Baronius Annals, Cent. XII.

are astonished in reading the details of persecution. That which raged against the Waldenses in the former part of the thirteenth century, was indeed an assemblage of every thing cruel, perfidious, indecent, and detestable. But we are not to imagine, that contemporaries beheld such scenes with the same horror with which we do: the "god of this world," with consummate dexterity, infatuates his slaves by a successive variety of wickedness adapted to circumstances. The scenes of villany, meanness, indecency, hypocrisy, and barbarity, which, for several years, have been carrying on in France, under the mask of philosophy, liberty, and rationality, have found, in our own country, many defenders, or at least apologists. The reason is, that irreligious scepticism or atheistic profaneness is the darling of these times, as superstition was that of the thirteenth century. And if men will not learn the all-important lesson, to obey the divine oracles, there seems no end of the deceits by which the prince of darkness will impose on mankind. CENT. XIII.

Waldensians accused of heresy. A. D. 1176.

In 1176 some of the Waldenses, called heretics, being examined by the bishops, were convicted of heresy. They were said to receive only the New Testament, and to reject the Old, except in the testimonies quoted by our Lord and the Apostles*. This charge is confuted by the whole tenour of their authentic writings, in which they quote the Old Testament authority as divine, without reserve or hesitation. Being interrogated concerning their faith, we are told that they said, "we are not bound to answer." Other accusations against them were as follow, namely, that they asserted the truth of the Manichean doctrine of two independent principles, that they denied the utility of infant-baptism, that the Lord's body was made by the consecration of an unworthy priest, that unfaithful ministers had

* Baron. Cent. XII.

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any right to the exercise of ecclesiastical power, or to titles and first-fruits, or that the faithful ought to attend their pastoral services, or that auricular confession was necessary, or that oaths were in any case lawful. The reader, who has attentively considered the foregoing accounts of the Waldenses, will know how to separate the falsehood from the truth contained in these charges. "All these things," says Baronius, "the wretched men asserted that they learned from the Gospels and Epistles, and that they would receive nothing, except what they found expressly contained there; thus rejecting the interpretation of the doctors, though they themselves were perfectly illiterate. "They were confuted," he adds, "at a conference before the bishop of Albi, from the New Testament, which alone they admitted; and they professed the Catholic faith, but would not swear, and were therefore condemned."

From this account, however imperfect, and in several instances palpably injurious, some further light may be collected of the state of the Waldenses at that time.

Henry II. and Lewis VII. endeavour to bring back the Albigenses to the Papal Church,

A. D. 1178.

In 1178, the same Lewis and Henry, who had sixteen years before, in so unkingly a manner, given their "power and strength to the beast*," hearing that the Albigenses grew in numbers, determined to attack them by the sword, but afterwards thought it more prudent to employ preachers†. They sent to them several bishops and ecclesiastics; and they employed Raymond of Toulouse and other noblemen

* Rev. xvii. 13.

† Baron. Cent. XII.

It is evident, that the term Albigenses, or rather Albienses, employed by our author, was taken from the town of Albi, where the Waldenses flourished. And, indeed, through the dominions of Raymond, earl of Toulouse, and through the south of France, including the territories of Avignon, their doctrines, at that time, spread with vast rapidity. All these were called, in general, Albigenses, and, in doctrine and manners, were not at all distinct from the Waldenses.

to expel the refractory. The Commissioners arriving at Toulouse, exacted, by an oath, of the Catholics there, that they should give information of the heretics whom they knew. Great numbers were hence discovered. Among these was a rich old man called Peter Moranus, who had pretended to be John the Evangelist *. This person, denying the bread to be the body of Christ, was condemned: his goods were confiscated: his castles, the conventicles of heretics, were thrown down. Peter abjured his heresy, and was brought naked and barefoot into the Church before all the people; the bishop of Toulouse and a certain abbot beating him on each side from the entrance of the building to the steps of the altar, where the cardinal legate celebrated mass. There, being reconciled to the Church, he again abjured his heresy, anathematized heretics, and submitted to another penance, which was this, namely, after forty days to leave his country, to serve the poor at Jerusalem three years; and, during the forty days, each Sunday to go round the Churches of Toulouse naked and barefoot, disciplined by rods, and to make various restitutions. It was ordered, however, that if he should return after three years from Jerusalem, then the rest of his property, till that time held in sequestration, should be restored to him. Many others abjured their heresies; but some refusing to take the oaths of subjection were excommunicated, with candles publicly lighted; and princes were ordered to expel them from their dominions. Roger, prince of the Albiensian diocese, was excommunicated. CENT. XIII.

The account of our English historian Hoveden † is similar to this of Baronius. It is remarkable, that the former calls the doctrine of the Albigenses the Arian heresy. But Arian or Manichee, or any

* It should be recollected, that this is the account given by Baronius, a very determined enemy of the Waldenses.

† P. 327.

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other term of reproach sufficiently answers the design of determined persecutors. It seems proper to give the account of the barbarous treatment of the rich old gentleman of Toulouse, who, though he recanted, was punished, because it confirms the truth of Perrin's narrative of the like persecutions, and demonstrates, from the testimony even of Roman writers, that the horrors of papal tyranny have not been misrepresented in general by protestant authors. And, on this occasion, I cannot but disapprove of the rashness or the prejudices of an able historian, who has already fallen under our notice*. He says, that the Albigenses, being examined, denied the Manichean doctrine of the two principles, though charged on that account with falsehood by their enemies: and this author believes these same enemies, who gave no proof of sincerity, that we know of, and accuses the Albigenses of dissimulation, though such numbers of them were suffering continually for their principles. The man, who undertakes to be an historian, ought to be acquainted with the writings and evidences which are produced on both sides of a controverted subject, so far as materials can be procured. If the author before us had read with the least attention the Waldensian records, he would never have asserted, that the Waldenses were legitimate descendants of the sect of Manes.

The subjects of Raymond, earl of Toulouse, and of some other great personages in his neighbourhood, so generally professed the Waldensian doctrines, that they became the peculiar object of papal vengeance. The inhabitants of Toulouse, Carcassone, Beziers, Narbonne, Avignon, and many other cities, who were commonly called the Albigenses, were exposed to a persecution as cruel and atrocious as any recorded in history. Reinerius, indeed, owns, that the Waldenses were the most formidable

* Berington's Hist. of Henry II. p. 305.

enemies of the Church of Rome, "because," saith he, "they have a great appearance of godliness; because they live righteously before men, believe rightly of God in all things, and hold all the Articles of the Creed; yet, they hate and revile the Church of Rome; and, in their accusations, they are easily believed by the people."

The Inquisition instituted by pope Innocent III. A. D. 1206.

It was reserved to Innocent the third, than whom no pope ever possessed more ambition, to institute the Inquisition*; and the Waldenses were the first objects of its cruelty. He authorized certain monks to frame the process of that court, and to deliver the supposed heretics to the secular power. The beginning of the thirteenth century saw thousands of persons hanged or burned by these diabolical devices, whose sole crime was, that they trusted only in Jesus Christ for salvation, and renounced all the vain hopes of self-righteous idolatry and superstition. Whoever has attended closely to the subjects of the two Epistles to the Colossians and the Galatians, and has penetrated the meaning of the Apostle, sees the great duty of HOLDING THE HEAD, and of resting for justification by faith on Jesus Christ alone, inculcated throughout them as the predominant precept of Christianity, in opposition to the rudiments of the world, to philosophy and vain deceit, to will-worship, to all dependence for our happiness on human works and devices of whatever kind. Such a person sees what is genuine protestantism, as contrasted to genuine popery; and, of course, he is convinced, that the difference is not merely verbal or frivolous, but that there is a perfect opposition in the two plans; and such as admits of no coalition or union; and that therefore the true way of withstanding the devices of Satan, is to be faithful to the great doctrine of justification, "only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus

* Some chronologists place the commencement of the Inquisition in 1204.

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Christ, by faith; and not by our own works or deservings *." Hence the very foundation of false religion is overthrown; hence troubled consciences obtain solid peace: and faith, working by love, leads men into the very spirit of Christianity, while it comforts their hearts, and stablishes them in every good work.

Schemes of religion so extremely opposite, being ardently pursued by both parties, could not fail to produce a violent rupture. In fact, the Church of Christ and the world were seen engaged in contest. Innocent, however, first tried the methods of argument and persuasion. He sent bishops and monks, who preached in those places, where the Waldensian doctrine flourished. But their success was very inconsiderable. In the neighbourhood of Narbonne two monks were employed, Peter de Chateauneuf, and Dominic †. The former of these was certainly murdered; and, it seems probable, by Raymond, count of Toulouse, because he had refused to remove the excommunication which he had denounced against that prince. Raymond himself strongly protected his Waldensian subjects, though there seems no evidence that he either understood or felt the vital influence of the protestant doctrines. But he was provoked at the imperious and turbulent measures of the monk, and saw the extreme injustice of the papal domination. He was also a witness of the purity of life and manners of his own subjects, and heard with indignation the calumnies with which they were aspersed by their adversaries, who proclaimed to all the world their own hypocrisy, avarice, and ambition. Incensed at these proceedings, Raymond seems to have taken a very unjustifiable method of extricating himself

Murder of Peter de Chateauneuf.

* Eleventh Article of Religion.

† This is the famous founder of the Dominicans, of whom I shall speak more distinctly in a separate article, and show how far the censures of Perrin concerning him, as author of the Inquisition, are founded in fact.

from the distresses to which the papal tyranny exposed him. But the event was disastrous; Innocent obtained what he wished, namely, a decent pretence for his horrible and most iniquitous persecution; and thousands of godly souls were unrighteously calumniated as accessory to the crime.

I need not dwell on the insidious customs of the Inquisition; they are but too well known. From the year 1206, when it was first established, to the year 1228, the havoc made among helpless Christians was so great, that certain French bishops, in the last-mentioned year, desired the monks of the Inquisition to defer a little their work of imprisonment, till the pope was advertised of the great numbers apprehended; numbers so great, that it was impossible to defray the charge of their subsistence, and even to provide stone and mortar to build prisons for them. Yet so true is it, that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, that in the year 1530 there were in Europe above eight hundred thousand who professed the religion of the Waldenses.

There were said to be 800,000 Waldenses in Europe, A. D. 1530.

When the Albigenses saw that the design of the pope was to gain the reputation of having used gentle and reasonable methods of persuasion, they agreed among themselves, to undertake the open defence of their principles. They therefore gave the bishops to understand, that their pastors, or some of them in the name of the rest, were ready to prove their religion to be truly scriptural, in an open conference, provided the conference might be conducted with propriety. They explained their ideas of propriety, by desiring that there might be moderators on both sides, who should be vested with full authority to prevent all tumult and violence; that the conference should be held in some place, to which all parties concerned might have free and safe access; and, moreover, that some one subject should be chosen, with the common consent of the

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disputants, which should be steadily prosecuted; till it was fully discussed and determined; and that he, who could not maintain it by the word of God, the only decisive rule of Christians, should own himself to be confuted.

A conference between the Papists and the Albigenses at Montreal, A. D. 1206.

All this was something more than specious: it was perfectly equitable and unexceptionably judicious: so much so, that the bishops and monks could not with decency refuse to accept the terms. The place of conference agreed upon was Montreal near Carcassone, in the year 1206. The umpires on the one side were the bishops of Villeneuse and Auxerre; on the other, R. de Bot, and Anthony Riviere.

Several pastors were deputed to manage the debate for the Albigenses, of whom Arnold Hot was the principal. He arrived first at the time and place appointed. A bishop named Eusus, came afterwards on the side of the papacy, accompanied by the monk Dominic, two of the pope's legates, and several other priests and monks. The points undertaken to be proved by Arnold, were, that the mass and transubstantiation were idolatrous and unscriptural; that the Church of Rome was not the spouse of Christ, and that its polity was bad and unholy. Arnold sent these propositions to the bishop, who required fifteen days to answer him, which was granted. At the day appointed, the bishop appeared, bringing with him a large manuscript, which was read in the conference. Arnold desired that he might be allowed to reply by word of mouth, only entreating their patience, if he took a considerable time in answering so prolix a writing. Fair promises of a patient hearing were granted him. He discoursed for the space of four days with great fluency and readiness, and with such order, perspicuity, and strength of argument, that a powerful impression was made on the audience.

At length, Arnold desired that the bishops and

monks would undertake to vindicate the mass and transubstantiation by the word of God. What they said on the occasion we are not told; but the cause of the abrupt conclusion of the conference, a matter of fact allowed on all sides, showed which party had the advantage in argument. While the two legates were disputing with Arnold at Montreal, and at the same time several other conferences were held in different places, the bishop of Villeneuse, the umpire of the papal party, declared, that nothing could be determined, because of the coming of the crusaders. What he asserted was too true; the papal armies advanced, and, by fire and faggot, soon decided all controversies. If the conferences had been continued, a historian of the real Church might have had much to relate. As the matter stands, he must withdraw: it is the business of the secular historian to relate the military achievements: some circumstances, however, which tend to illustrate the merit and conduct of the Church of Christ, must be the objects of our attention. CENT. XIII.

Arnold and his assistants were, doubtless, of the number of those, who "did truth, and therefore came to the light, that their deeds might be made manifest, that they were wrought in God." And their adversaries were of those who "hated the light, and would not come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved*:" Amidst the darkness and uncertainty in which, independently of revelation, every fundamental truth of salvation must be involved in a world like this, and among creatures so depraved as mankind, a readiness to abide by the decisions of the divine oracles, or an unwillingness to stand the test of Scripture, demonstrates who are right and who are wrong. In all ages this has appeared to be the case: but we seldom meet with so striking an instance as this which we have reviewed.

* John, iii.

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"In the sacrifice of the mass, it was commonly said, that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt." This the Church of England* calls "a blasphemous fable and a dangerous deceit," asserting that "there is none other satisfaction for sin, but the offering of Christ once made for all the sins of the whole world." This was one question in the controversy between the two parties, for the decision of which the Scriptures were surely very competent. The recourse, which the popish party had to arms, in the room of sober argumentation, what was it but to pour contempt on the word of God itself, and to confess that its light was intolerably offensive to them? The approach of the crusaders, who, in the manner related, put an end to the conference, was not accidental; for Innocent, who never intended to decide the controversy by argument, on occasion of the unhappy murder of the monk before mentioned, had dispatched preachers throughout Europe, to collect all who were willing to revenge the innocent blood of Peter of Chateauneuf; promising Paradise to those who should bear arms for forty days, and bestowing on them the same indulgences as he did on those, who undertook to conquer the Holy Land. "We moreover, promise," says he, in his bull, "to all those who shall take up arms to revenge the said murder, the pardon and remission of their sins. And since we are not to keep faith with those, who do not keep it with God, we would have all to understand, that every person, who is bound to the said earl Raymond by oath of allegiance, or by any other way, is absolved by apostolical authority from such obligations; and it is lawful for any Roman Catholic to persecute the said earl, and to seize upon his country," &c.

Who is this, that forgiveth sins, except God only? and, who is this, that also dispenses with the most

* Article XXXI.

solemn moral obligations? Is he not Antichrist, showing himself that he is God? On this and some other occasions I choose to give the very expressions of the papal bulls, as a sufficient confutation of the sophisms by which some modern writers have endeavoured to palliate or do away the crimes of the popedom. The language, indeed, of our early protestant writers against popery is severe beyond measure; but it hardly could be equal to the desert of those whom they opposed. The most material error of the modern protestants, as I have before observed on these subjects, seems to be, that they have been too hasty in fixing the date of the MAN OF SIN. But after he really appeared in the horrors of his maturity, he was all which the most impassioned declaimer can say against him. CENT. XIII.

Bull of Innocent III. against the Albigenses.

The tyrant proceeds in his bull: "we exhort you, that you would endeavour to destroy the wicked heresy of the Albigenses, and do this with more rigour than you would use towards the Saracens themselves: persecute them with a strong hand: deprive them of their lands and possessions: banish them, and put Roman Catholics in their room." Such was the pope's method of punishing a whole people, for a single murder committed by Raymond. Philip Augustus, king of France, was at that time too much engaged in wars with Otho the emperor, and John king of England, to enter upon the crusades. But the French barons, incited by the motives of avarice, which Innocent suggested, undertook the work with vigour.

Raymond of Toulouse was now struck with terror. Political motives had fixed him with the Protestant party, because his subjects and neighbours were very commonly on that side. But he himself seems to have wanted a divine principle of faith to animate his mind in the defence of the righteous cause. The other princes, his neighbours, seem equally destitute of the spirit of genuine religion. They might

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have resisted their enemies very vigorously by the aid of their subjects, whose loyalty was unalterably firm, and who knew it was a religious duty to be faithful to their temporal sovereigns. In those feudal times, Raymond, rather than Philip, was sovereign of the people of Toulouse: the spirit of the Protestants was strong and powerful; and even the Romanists, who were mixed with them, were perfectly disposed to unite in the common defence. But I find not in all the account of the war a single instance of a prince or leader, who was faithful to the cause of God as such. No wonder then that the chiefs sunk under the load of oppression, and suffered themselves, repeatedly, to be the dupes of Roman perfidy. The Christians had then no other part to act, after having discharged the duty of faithful subjects and soldiers, but to suffer with patience the oppressions of Antichrist.

Barbarities of the Papal party.

Three hundred thousand pilgrims, induced by the united motives of avarice and superstition, filled the country of the Albigenses with carnage and confusion for a number of years. The reader, who is not versed in history of this kind, can scarcely conceive the scenes of baseness, perfidy, barbarity, indecency, and hypocrisy, over which Innocent presided; and which were conducted partly by his legates, and partly by the infamous earl Simon of Montfort. But let it suffice to have said this in general: it is more to our purpose to observe the spirit of the people of God in these grievous tribulations. The castle of Menerbe on the frontiers of Spain, for want of water, was reduced to the necessity of surrendering to the pope's legate. A certain abbot undertook to preach to those who were found in the castle, and to exhort them to acknowledge the pope. But they interrupted his discourse, declaring that his labour was to no purpose. Earl Simon and the legate then caused a great fire to be kindled; and they burned a hundred and forty per-

Particularly of Simon of Montfort.

sons of both sexes. These martyrs died in triumph, praising God that he had counted them worthy to suffer for the sake of Christ. They opposed the legate to his face, and told Simon, that on the last day, when the books should be opened, he would meet with the just judgment of God for all his cruelties. Several monks entreated them to have pity on themselves, and promised them their lives if they would submit to the popedom. But the Christians "loved not their lives to the death*:" only three women of the company recanted.

Simon takes the Castle of Menerbe.

Another castle, named Termes, not far from Menerbe, in the territory of Narbonne, was taken by Simon in the year 1210. "This place," said Simon, "is of all others the most execrable, because no mass has been sung in it for thirty years." A remark which gives us some idea both of the stability and numbers of the Waldenses: the very worship of popery, it seems, was expelled from this place. The inhabitants made their escape by night, and avoided the merciless hands of Simon.

Also the Castle of Termes, A. D. 1210.

A single act of humanity, exercised by this general on the principles of chivalry, toward several women, whose persons he preserved from military insult and outrage, is the only one of the kind recorded of him.

But the triumphing of the wicked is short: after he had been declared sovereign of Toulouse, which he had conquered, General of the armies of the Church, its Son and its darling, after he had oppressed and tyrannized over the Albigenses by innumerable confiscations and exactions, he was slain in battle in the year 1218.

Simon slain, A. D. 1218.

Earl Raymond, whose life had been a scene of great calamity, died of sickness in the year 1222, in a state of peace and prosperity, after his victory over Simon. We are told, that, though political and humane motives at first alone influenced his

Earl Raymond dies, A. D. 1222.

* Rev. xii. 7.

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conduct, he at length saw the falsity of the popish doctrine. No man, surely, was ever treated with more injustice by the popedom,—not to mention that his memory is clouded with the suspicion of the murder before mentioned*. But I know no evidence of his religious knowledge and piety. His persecutor, Innocent, died in 1216; and the famous Dominic, who, according to the assertion of our author Perrin, was active in the inquisition, and was accustomed to the destruction which Simon had begun by arms, died in the year 1220.

Innocent III. died, A. D. 1216.

Dominic died, A. D. 1220.

Amalric of Montfort, the son of Simon, wearied out with the war, resigned to Lewis VIII. the son and successor of Philip, all his possessions and pretensions in the country of the Albigenses; in recompense of which, the French king made him constable of France, in the year 1224. This was the step which proved the ruin of the Albigenses. The French monarchy was now interested in their destruction; and though Lewis VIII. died soon after, and Lewis IX. his son and successor, was a minor, yet the capacity of the regent, the queen mother, was found equal to the work of aggrandizing the crown at the expense of the Albigenses. Raymond, the heir of his father's miseries, was treated with the most merciless barbarity; and, after a series of sufferings, died of a fever at Milan.

Amalric, the son of Simon of Montfort, resigns his Albigensian possessions to the French, A. D. 1224.

Alphonsus, brother of Lewis IX. was put into possession of the earldom of Toulouse. Joan, the only daughter of the late earl Raymond, had been delivered, when only nine years old, to the French court, that she might, when of age, be married to Alphonsus. Thus secular and ecclesiastical ambition united to oppress the Churches of Christ. The monk Reinerius, whom we have had occasion repeatedly to quote, acted as inquisitor in the year 1250. There is evidence of the extreme violence of persecution continued against the Albigenses, now

Reinerius was inquisitor, A. D. 1250.

* See page 586 of this vol.

altogether defenceless, to the year 1281. Long before this, in the year 1229; a council was held at Toulouse, one of the canons of which was, that the laity were not allowed to have the Old or New Testament in the vulgar tongue, except a psalter or the like; and it forbad men even to translate the Scriptures. CENT. XIII. This persecution continued violent till about A. D. 1281.

This is the first instance in the popedom which I meet with, of a direct prohibition of the books of Scripture to the laity. Indirectly the same thing had long been practised. What an honour was this canon to the cause of the Albigenses! What a confession of guilt on the side of the Romanists! The people of God were thus, at length, for the most part, exterminated in Toulouse, and found no other resource but, by patient continuance in well-doing, to commit themselves to their God and Saviour. Antichrist, for the present, was visibly triumphant in the south-west parts of France, and the witnesses "clothed in sackcloth," there consoled themselves with the hope of heavenly rest, being deprived of all prospect of earthly enjoyments. The first instance of a direct prohibition of the Scriptures to the Laity took place, A. D. 1229.

It may not be improper to mention here, that our famous monkish historian, Matthew Paris, relates, that the Albigenses set up a person named Bartholomew for pope, who resided in the neighbourhood of Toulouse, consecrated bishops, and governed their churches; and that in one battle the Albigenses lost a hundred thousand men, with all their bishops.

These stories easily confute themselves; nor is it necessary to observe, that the ignorance of M. Paris, in French history, is palpably glaring. The only use which I would make of this fiction is to show, how unsafe it is to rely on rumours, concerning subjects which affect the passions of mankind, published by persons who live in places very distant from the scene of action; and to guard the minds of those among ourselves, who hear stories concerning profes-

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sors of godliness, propagated by men, who are unacquainted with the grounds of religious controversy.

The valley of Pragela had six churches, A. D. 1618.

Dauphiny is a province of France, which was very full of the Waldenses, who inhabited vallies on both sides of the Alps. On the Italian side, the valley of Pragela in particular had, in our author's time, in 1618, six churches, each having its pastor, and every pastor having the care of several villages, which appertained to his church. The oldest people in them, Perrin observes, never remembered to have heard mass sung in their country. The valley itself was one of the most secure retreats of the Waldenses, being environed on all sides with mountains, into whose caverns the people were accustomed to retreat in time of persecution. Vignaux, one of their preachers, used to admire the integrity of the people, whom no dangers whatever could seduce from the faith of their ancestors. Their children were catechised with the minutest care; and their pastors not only exhorted them on the sabbaths, but also, on the week days went to their hamlets to instruct them. With much inconvenience to themselves, these teachers climbed the steepest mountains to visit their flocks. The word of God was heard with reverence: the voice of prayer was common in private houses, as well as in the churches: Christian simplicity and zeal abounded; and plain useful learning was diligently cultivated in the schools.

Cruelties of the Inquisitor Borelli, A. D. 1380.

A monk inquisitor, named Francis Borelli, in the year 1380, armed with a bull of Clement VII. undertook to persecute the godly Waldenses. In the space of thirteen years he delivered a hundred and fifty persons to the secular power, to be burned at Grenoble. In the valley of Fraissiniere and the neighbourhood, he apprehended eighty persons, who also were burned. The monkish inquisitors adjudged one moiety of the goods of the persons condemned to themselves, the rest to the temporal

lords. What efforts may not be expected, when avarice, malice, and superstition unite in the same cause?

Persecutions in the valley of Pragela, A. D. 1400.

About the year 1400, the persecutors attacked the Waldenses of the valley of Pragela. The poor people seeing their caves possessed by their enemies, who assaulted them during the severity of the winter, retreated to one of the highest mountains of the Alps, the mothers carrying cradles, and leading by the hand those little children, who were able to walk. Many of them were murdered, others were starved to death: a hundred and eighty children were found dead in their cradles, and the greatest part of their mothers died soon after them. But why should I relate all the particulars of such a scene of infernal barbarity?

Also in the valley of Fraissiniere, A. D. 1460.

In 1460, those of the valley of Fraissiniere were persecuted by a monk of the order of Friar Minors, or Franciscans, armed with the authority of the archbishop of Ambrun. And it appears from documents preserved till the time of Perrin, that every method which fraud and calumny could invent, was practised against them.

And in the valley of Loyse.

In the valley of Loyse, four hundred little children were found suffocated in their cradles, or in the arms of their deceased mothers, in consequence of a great quantity of wood being placed at the entrance of the caves and set on fire. On the whole, above three thousand persons belonging to the valley were destroyed, and this righteous people were in that place exterminated. The Waldenses of Pragela and Fraissiniere, alarmed by these sanguinary proceedings, made provision for their own safety, and expected the enemy at the passage and narrow straits of their vallies, and were in fact so well prepared to receive them, that the invaders were obliged to retreat. Some attempts were made afterwards by the Waldenses in Fraissiniere to regain their property, which had been unjustly seized by

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their persecutors. The favour of Lewis XII. of France, was exerted toward them; yet they could never obtain any remedy.

In Piedmont the archbishops of Turin assiduously laboured to molest the Waldenses, having been informed by the priests in those vallies, that the people made no offerings for the dead, valued not masses and absolutions, and took no care to redeem their relations from the pains of purgatory. The love of lucre, no doubt, had a principal share in promoting the persecutions; for the sums collected by the means of these and similar vanities, were immense. The princes of Piedmont, however, who were the dukes of Savoy, were very unwilling to disturb their subjects, of whose loyalty, peaceableness, industry, and probity they received such uniform testimony. A fact, which seemed peculiarly to demonstrate their general innocence, must be noticed; their neighbours particularly prized a Piedmontese servant, and preferred the women of the vallies above all others, to nurse their children. Calumny, however, prevailed at length; and such a number of accusations against them appeared, charging them with crimes of the most monstrous nature, that the civil power permitted the papal to indulge its thirst for blood. Dreadful cruelties were inflicted on the people of God; and these, by their constancy, revived the memory of the primitive martyrs. Among them Catelin Girard was distinguished, who, standing on the block, on which he was to be burned at Revel in the marquisate of Saluces, requested his executioners to give him two stones: which request being with difficulty obtained, the martyr, holding them in his hands, said, When I have eaten these stones, then you shall see an end of that religion, for which ye put me to death. And then he cast the stones on the ground.

The fires continued to be kindled till the year

1488, when the method of military violence was adopted by the persecutors. Albert de Capitaneis, archdeacon of Cremona, was deputed by pope Innocent VIII. to assault the sufferers with the sword. Eighteen thousand soldiers were raised for the service, besides many of the Piedmontese papists, who ran to the plunder from all parts. But the Waldenses, armed with wooden targets and crossbows, and availing themselves of the natural advantages of their situation, repulsed their enemies; the women and children on their knees entreating the Lord to protect his people, during the engagement.

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Military violence employed against the Waldenses, A. D. 1488.

Philip, duke of Savoy, had the candour to distinguish the spirit of resistance made by his subjects in this transaction, from a spirit of sedition and turbulence, being convinced that they had ever been a loyal and obedient people. He accepted, therefore, their apology, and forgave them what was past. But having been informed, that their young children were born with black throats; that they were hairy, and had four rows of teeth, he ordered some of them to be brought before him to Pignerol; where, having convinced himself by ocular demonstration, that the Waldenses were not monsters, he determined to protect them from the persecution. But he seems not to have had sufficient power to execute his good intentions. The papal inquisitors daily endeavoured to apprehend these sincere followers of Christ, and the persecution lasted till the year 1532. Then it was that the Piedmontese began openly to perform divine worship in their churches. This provoked the civil power, at length, against them to such a degree, that it concurred more vigorously with the papal measures of military violence.

The Persecution continued till about A. D. 1532.

The Waldenses, however, defended themselves with courage and success: the priests left the country: the mass was expelled from Piedmont; and,

The Waldensians defend themselves manfully against both

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the civil and papal power.

They expel the Mass, and print all the Bible,

A. D. 1535.

whereas the people had hitherto only the New Testament and some books of the Old translated into the Waldensian tongue, they now sent the whole Bible to the press; for, till 1535, they had only manuscripts, and those few in number. They procured, at Neuf Chatel in Switzerland, a printed Bible from one, who published the first impression of the Word of God which was seen in France. They endeavoured to provide themselves also with religious books from Geneva, but their messenger was apprehended and put to death.

The persecutions were continued against this people by Francis I. king of France, with savage barbarity; and, in particular, Jeffery, who was burned in the castle-yard at Turin, made a strong impression on the minds of many, by his piety, meekness, and constancy.

Persecution and death of Bartholomew Copin.

It would be uninteresting to pursue circumstantially the story of the persecutions, which continued with more or less violence till the end of the sixteenth century, when Bartholomew Copin, of the valley of Lucerne, being at Ast in Piedmont with merchandise for the fair, was apprehended for uttering some words against the papacy. He bore his sufferings with much firmness and constancy, and resisted various attempts of the monks to overcome his spirit. He wrote to his wife, professing his entire dependence on the grace of Jesus Christ for his salvation. But he died in prison, not without suspicion of having been strangled. After his death his body was consumed by fire.

The Christian rules of submission to governments, and the practice of the Waldenses in general, were at no great variance. Yet, it is certain, that the primitive Christians would have conscientiously refused to bear arms at all against their own sovereigns, however tyrannical and oppressive they might be. Whether, in some instances, these per-

secuted Christians of the vallies did not violate the apostolical precepts on this subject*, is not very easy to be decided, because it requires a minute acquaintance with their particular circumstances, to determine who was their sovereign. Sometimes they were under the king of France; at other times under the duke of Savoy; and, it is not to be doubted, but that, at all times, they had a right to resist the pope as a foreign enemy, and an enemy of uncommon ambition, injustice, and cruelty.

At the end of the sixteenth century, in consequence of some exchange made by virtue of a treaty between Henry IV. of France and the duke of Savoy, the Waldenses of the marquisate of Saluces lost the privileges which they had enjoyed under the French government; and, by the oppression of their new sovereign of Savoy, through the importunity of the pope, were obliged to fly into France for security. Some of them, from the love of the world, renounced the faith; but the greatest part preferred exile with a good conscience, to an enjoyment of their native country. On this occasion, they declared, in a well-written manifesto, their spirit of loyalty and peaceableness, the hardships of their case, and their perfect agreement in principle with all the reformed Churches. So certain is it, that the Waldenses were, in every substantial article, genuine protestants and witnesses of evangelical truth.

Alpian Waldenses are persecuted, A. D. 1570.

A number of Waldenses, who resided in the Alps, possessed several villages, and, in particular, the city of Barcelonette. These, being persecuted by the prince of Piedmont in the year 1570, in conjunction with some others, implored the protestant princes to intercede with their sovereign on their behalf. The prince palatine of the Rhine exerted himself with much zeal on the occasion. But the people

* Rom. xiii. 1 Pet. ii.

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of Barcelonette being obliged to leave their settlements, amidst a choice of difficulties, were reduced to the extremity of attempting, in the midst of winter, to pass over a high mountain. The greatest part of them perished; the rest retired into the valley of Fraissiniere.

There had been a Waldensian settlement in Calabria, A. D. 1370.

About the year 1370, some of the Waldensian youths of Dauphiny sought in Calabria a new settlement, because their native country was too small for the number of the inhabitants. Finding the soil fertile, and the region thinly peopled, they applied to the proprietors of the lands, and treated with them concerning the conditions of dwelling there. The lords of the country gave them the most kind reception, agreed with them on fair and equitable terms, and assigned them parcels of lands. The new colonists soon enriched and fertilized their respective districts by superior industry: and, by probity, peaceable manners, and punctual payment of their rents, they gained the affections of their landlords, and of all their neighbours. The priests alone, who found that they did not act like others in religion, and that they contributed nothing to the support of the hierarchy by masses for the dead, or by other Romish formalities, were highly offended. They were particularly vexed to find, that certain foreign schoolmasters, who taught the children of these strangers, were held in high respect, and that they themselves received nothing from them except tithes, which were paid according to the compact with their lords. From these circumstances, the priests concluding that the strangers must be heretics, were tempted to complain of them to the pope. The lords, however, withheld them from complaining of the people. "They are just and honest," say they, "and have enriched all the country. Even ye priests have received substantial emolument from their labours. The tithes alone, which ye now receive, are so much superior to those,

which were formerly produced from these countries, that you may well bear with some losses on other accounts. Perhaps the country whence they came is not so much addicted to the ceremonies of the Roman Church. But as they fear God, are liberal to the needy, just and beneficent to all men, it is ungenerous anxiously to scrutinize their consciences. For are they not a temperate, sober, prudent people, and in their words peculiarly decent? And does any person ever hear them utter a blasphemous expression?" The lords admiring their tenants, who were distinguished from the inhabitants all around by probity and virtue, maintained and protected them against their enemies till the year 1560.

The Lords of the country protected the settlement till A. D. 1560.

In all this the fruits of godliness among the Waldenses were apparent, even to those who knew not the nature of godliness itself. The lords, moved by temporal interest, behaved with candour, while the priests, who felt, or thought they felt their interest undermined by these strangers, murmured and expressed their indignation. It is not to be wondered at, that the priests of idolatry should every where be the greatest enemies of true religion. It is nothing more than the natural effect of human depravity. Their passions, through the medium of interest, are more sensibly struck at than those of others; and the true use to be made of such events, is, for all men, laity, as well as priests, to learn the true doctrine of the fall of man, and its consequences. The Calabrian Waldenses sent to Geneva in the year 1560, to request a supply of pastors. Two, namely, Stephen Negrin, and Lewis Paschal, were sent into Calabria; who endeavoured to establish the public exercise of Protestantism. Pope Pius IV. having notice of this, determined to extirpate a people who had presumed to plant Lutheranism,—so he called their religion,—so near to his seat. What follows of the history of this people is a distressful scene of persecution. Numbers

In that year the Calabrian Waldenses sent for a supply of Pastors to Geneva.

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of them being murdered, by two companies of soldiers headed by the pope's agents, the rest craved mercy for themselves, their wives, and children, declaring, that if they were permitted to leave the country with a few conveniences, they would not return to it any more. But their enemies knew not how to show mercy; and the persecuted Christians at length defended themselves from their invaders, and put them to flight. The viceroy of Naples, hearing of these things, appeared in person to prosecute the diabolical business of the pope; and, in a little time, the Calabrian Waldenses were entirely exterminated. The most barbarous cruelties were inflicted on many: some were tortured, in order to oblige them to own, that their friends had committed the most flagitious incests; and the whole apparatus of pagan persecution was seen to be revived in the south of Italy.

Dreadful persecution ensued by Pope Pius IV.

A certain youth, named Samson, defended himself a long time against those, who came to apprehend him. But being wounded, he was at length taken, and led to the top of a tower. Confess yourself to a priest here present, said the persecutors, before you be thrown down. I have already, said Samson, confessed myself to God. Throw him down from the tower, said the inquisitor. The next day the viceroy passing below near the said tower, saw the poor man yet alive, with all his bones broken. He kicked him with his foot on the head, saying, Is the dog yet alive? Give him to the hogs to eat.

The story of Samson.

But I turn from a scene, where there is nothing but a repetition of enormities, which have often been exposed in the course of this history, and which equally show the influence of the prince of darkness, and the enmity of the carnal mind against God: let it suffice to add, that Stephen Negrin was starved to death in prison, and that Lewis Paschal was conveyed to Rome, where he was

burned alive in the presence of Pius IV. That tyrant feasted his eyes with the sight of the man in the flames, who had dared to call him Antichrist. Paschal, however, was enabled to testify, in his last scenes, from the word of God, many things which much displeased the pope; and, by the zeal, constancy, and piety, which he displayed in his death, he failed not to excite the pity and admiration of the spectators. CENT. XIII.

Calumnies against the Waldenses of Provence, A. D. 1506.

The Waldenses of Provence fertilized a barren soil by their industry, but, like their brethren elsewhere, were exposed to persecution. An attempt was made to prejudice the mind of Lewis XII. against them, about the year 1506, by such calumnies as those, with which the primitive Christians were aspersed. The king, struck with horror, directed the parliament of Provence to investigate the charges, and to punish those, who were found guilty. But afterwards, understanding that some innocent men were put to death, he sent two persons to inquire into the conduct of this people, by whose distinct information he was so thoroughly convinced of their innocence, that he swore they were better men than himself and his Catholic subjects; and he protected them during the rest of his reign. Thus the candour, humanity, and generosity of that monarch, who was deservedly looked on as the father of his people, was providentially instrumental in the defence of the Waldenses.

Some time after, these Provençal protestants wrote a letter to the reformer Ecolampadius of Basle, which, as a monument of Christian humility and simplicity, well deserves to be transcribed. "Health to Mr. Ecolampadius. Whereas several persons have given us to understand, that He, who is able to do all things, hath replenished you with his Holy Spirit, as it conspicuously appears by the fruits; we, therefore, have recourse to you from a far country, with a steadfast hope, that the Holy

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Ghost will enlighten our understanding by your means, and give us the knowledge of several things, in which we are now doubtful, and which are hidden from us, because of our slothful ignorance and remissness, to the great damage, as we fear, both of ourselves and of the people, of whom we are the unworthy teachers. That you may know at once how matters stand with us, we, such as we are, poor instructors of this small people, have undergone, for above four hundred years, most cruel persecutions, not without signal marks of the favour of Christ; for he hath interposed to deliver us, when under the harrow of severe tribulations. In this our state of weakness we come to you for advice and consolation."

They wrote in the same strain to other reformers, and were, it seems, so zealous to profit by their superior light and knowledge, that they willingly exposed themselves, by this means, to a share of the same persecutions which at that time oppressed the Lutherans,—so the reformed were then generally called,—both in France and through all Europe.

Ecolampadius admonishes the Waldenses of Provence,

A. D. 1530.

Ecolampadius, in the year 1530, wrote to the Waldenses of Provence, to protest against the crime of attending the mass and bowing before idols, with which some of them were infected. He showed that such pretended satisfactions for the sins of the living and the dead, implied that Jesus Christ had not made sufficient expiation, that he is no Saviour, and died for us in vain; and that, if it be lawful for us to conceal our faith under the tyranny of Antichrist, it would have been lawful to worship Jupiter or Venus. These admonitions were well adapted to the circumstances of the Waldenses; for they soon after had large occasion to practise them. Even one of the messengers, who brought the letters, was seized in his journey at Dijon, and condemned to death as a Lutheran. In the parliament of Aix, in the year

1540, one of the most inhuman edicts recorded in history was pronounced against the Provençal Christians. It was ordered that the country of Merindol should be laid waste, and the woods cut down, to the compass of two hundred paces around. The name and authority of king Francis I. was obtained by surprise, and the revocation of the edict, which he afterwards sent to the parliament on better information, was suppressed by the persecutors. The murders, rapes, and desolations, were horrible beyond all description. In particular, a number of women were shut up in a barn full of straw, which was set on fire; and a soldier, moved with compassion, having opened a place for them, that they might escape, these helpless victims of papal rage were driven back into the flames by pikes and halberts. Other cruelties were practised on this occasion, so horrid, that they might seem to exceed belief, were not the authenticity of the accounts unquestionable; and he who knows what human nature is when left to itself and to Satan, knows that there is no evil of which it is not capable.

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Inhuman Edict against them by the Parliament of Aix, A. D. 1540.

In justice, however, to Francis I. a prince in his temper by no means cruel and oppressive, it is proper to add, that being informed of the execution of this barbarous edict, to which he had with great precipitation given his name, he was filled with bitter remorse, being now at the point of death, and he charged his son Henry to punish the murderers. The advocate Guerin, however, was the only person, who was punished on the occasion. He was, in truth, the most guilty, because it was he, who had suppressed the king's revocation of the bloody edict.

Those who had escaped, afterwards by degrees recovered their possessions, and taking advantage of the edict of Nantes, enjoyed the protection of government, in common with the rest of the Protestants in France.

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If we look into Bohemia, the country in which Waldo ended his days, we find that the Waldensian Churches existed there in the fourteenth century, but that they had been broken up as a professing people, when the Hussites,—of whom hereafter,—began to flourish. The Hussites were later than they by two hundred and forty years, and are allowed by their own writers to have agreed in principle with the Waldenses; none of whose writings, however, were extant in Bohemia at the time when the doctrine of Huss was received in that country. So completely had papal tyranny prevailed! but Providence raised up other witnesses.

The Hussites correspond with the Waldenses, A. D. 1467.

In Austria, the number of Waldenses was exceedingly great. About the year 1467, the Hussites entered into a Christian correspondence with them; in the course of which they gently rebuked them on account of the idolatrous compliances too visible in their churches. The Hussites also found fault with them, because they were too solicitous in amassing wealth. "Every day," say they, "has its cares and afflictions; but as Christians ought to look only for heavenly riches, we cannot but condemn your excessive attention to the world, by which you may gradually be induced to set your whole heart on the things of time and sense." This looks like the language of younger converts, who, having not yet forsaken their "first love*," are apt to see the evils of a worldly spirit in a stronger light even than older and more experienced Christians, who may have sunk into lukewarmness. It should be remembered that the Hussites were, at this time, beginners in religion, compared to the Waldenses. These latter were, however, exposed soon after this to terrible persecutions; and those of them, who escaped, fled into Bohemia, and united themselves to the Hussites.

* Rev. ii.

CENT. XIII.

In Germany, in the year 1230, the papal inquisition oppressed the Waldenses with peculiar severity. They were, notwithstanding, steadfast in their profession; and their pastors publicly announced the pope to be Antichrist, affirming, that if God had not sent them into Germany to preach the Gospel, the very stones would have been raised up to instruct mankind. "We give not," say they, "a fictitious remission, but we preach the remission of sins appointed by God himself in his Word." About the year 1330, Echard, a Dominican monk, an inquisitor, grievously oppressed them. At length, after many cruelties, he urged the Waldenses to inform him of the real cause of their separation from the Church of Rome, being convinced in his conscience of the justice of several of their charges. This was an opportunity, not often vouchsafed to this people by their enemies, of using the weapons of Christian warfare. The event was salutary: Echard was enlightened, confessed the faith of Christ, united himself to his people; like Paul, he preached the faith which once he destroyed; and, in the issue, was burned at Heidelberg; and the Christians glorified God in him.

The German Waldenses grievously persecuted by the papal inquisition, A. D. 1230.

Very remarkable story of Echard, a Dominican monk. A. D. 1330.

Raynard Lollard was another convert of the same kind, at first a Franciscan and an enemy to the Waldenses. He was taken by the inquisitors after he had diligently taught the Gospel, and was burned at Cologne. From him the Wickliffites in England were called Lollards; and he it was who instructed the English who resided in Guienne, in the Waldensian doctrine. The connexion between France and England, during the whole reign of Edward III. was so great, that it is by no means improbable, that Wickliffe himself derived his first impressions of religion from Lollard. Princes and states may carry on wars and negotiations with one another; while HE, who rules all things, makes every event

CHAP. IV.

subservient to the great design of spreading the kingdom of his Son.

Violent persecutions in Flanders, A. D. 1163.

Flanders was also a violent scene of Waldensian persecution, though our author seems to know little of the particulars. From another writer* it appears, that in 1163 some of the Waldenses retired from Flanders to Cologne. Here they were discovered and confined in a barn. Egbert, an abbot, disputed with them: three were burned; and a young woman, whom the people would have spared, threw herself into the flames. In 1183, great numbers were burnt alive. A person named Robert, first a Waldensian, afterwards a Dominican, was appointed inquisitor-general by the pope. This man, knowing the usual places of concealment, burned or buried alive about fifty persons in the year 1236. But he met with that punishment in this life, which was calculated to convince him of his enormous sin. The pope suspended him for the abuse of his power, and condemned him to perpetual imprisonment.

Also in the year, A. D. 1183.

Robert, a Dominican, burnt or buried alive more than fifty persons, A. D. 1236

Persecutors in Flanders tormented the Christians by means of hornets, wasps, and hives of bees. The people of God, however, were strong in faith and love. They turned the Scripture into Low Dutch rhimes, for the edification of the brethren; and they gave this reason for the practice: "In Scripture there are no jests, fables, trifles, or deceits; but words of solid truth. Here and there, indeed, is a hard crust; but the marrow and sweetness of what is good and holy may easily be discovered in it." A peculiar regard for Holy Writ amidst ages of darkness, forms the glory of the Waldensian Churches.

England, because of its insular situation, knew less of all these scenes than the continent. But the striking narrative of the sufferers, in the time of

* Brandt's Hist. of the Reform. in the Netherlands.

Henry II. which has been recorded, ought to be added to the list of Waldensian persecutions. No part of Europe, in short, was exempt from the sufferings of these Christian heroes. Paris itself, the metropolis of France, saw, in 1304, a hundred and fourteen persons burned alive, who bore the flames with admirable constancy. CENT. XIII.

One hundred and fourteen persons burnt alive at Paris, A. D. 1304.

Thus largely did the "King of Saints*" provide for the instruction of his Church, in the darkness of the middle ages. The Waldenses are the middle link, which connects the primitive Christians and Fathers with the reformed; and, by their means, the proof is completely established, that salvation, by the grace of Christ, felt in the heart, and expressed in the life, by the power of the Holy Ghost, has ever existed from the time of the Apostles till this day; and that it is a doctrine marked by the Cross, and distinct from all that religion of mere form or convenience, or of human invention, which calls itself Christian, but wants the Spirit of Christ.

* Rev. xv. 3.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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